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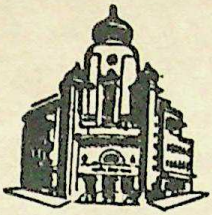

BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

PROBLEM OF HINDI
A STUDY

A. K. Majumdar

GENERAL EDITORS

K. M. MUNSHI

R. R. DIWAKAR

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY

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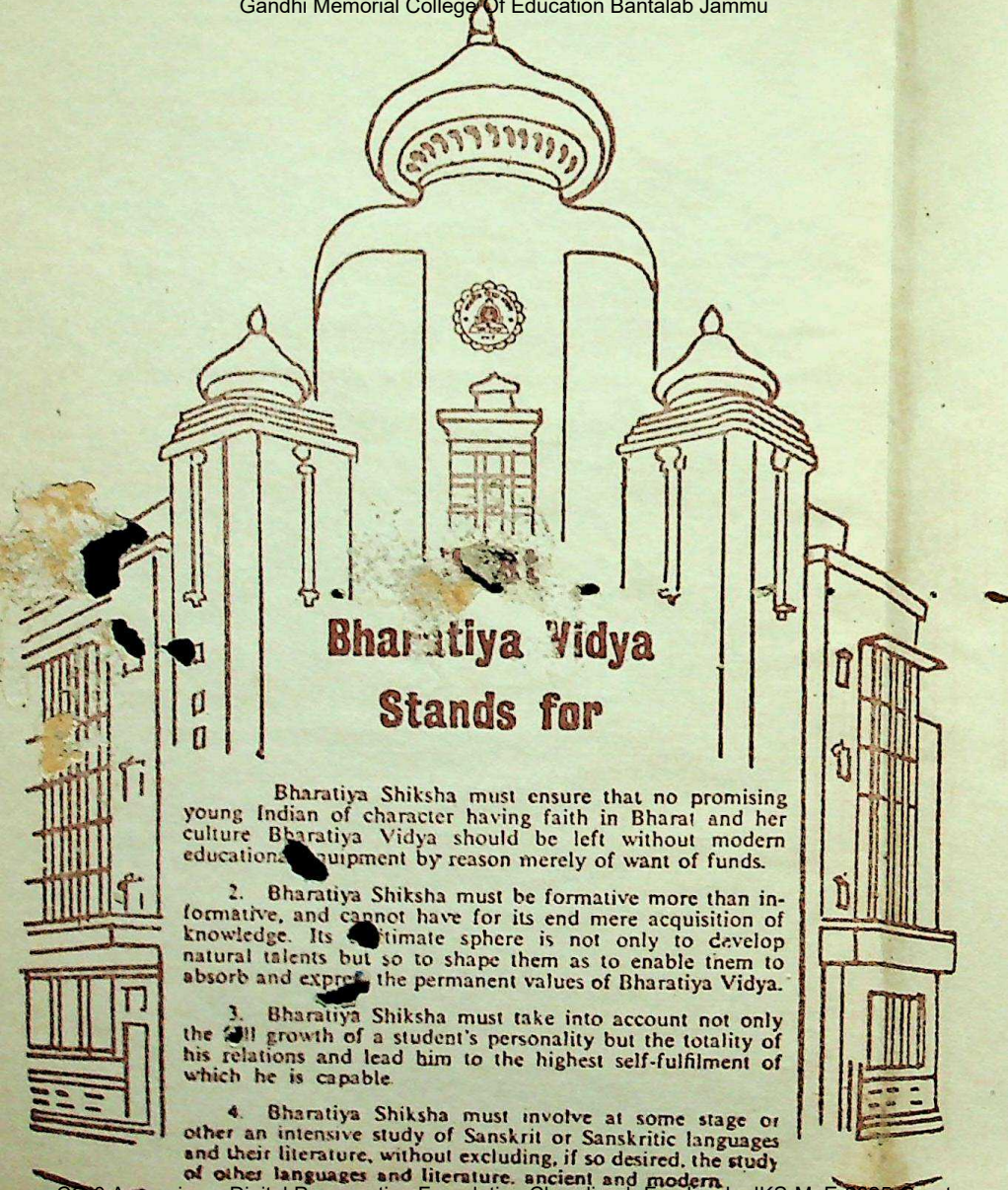

Bharatiya Vidya Stands for

Bharatiya Shiksha must ensure that no promising young Indian of character having faith in Bharat and her culture Bharatiya Vidya should be left without modern education [illegible]uipment by reason merely of want of funds.

2. Bharatiya Shiksha must be formative more than informative, and cannot have for its end mere acquisition of knowledge. Its [illegible]timate sphere is not only to develop natural talents but so to shape them as to enable them to absorb and expre[illegible] the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya.

3. Bharatiya Shiksha must take into account not only the [illegible]l growth of a student's personality but the totality of his relations and lead him to the highest self-fulfilment of which he is capable.

4. Bharatiya Shiksha must involve at some stage or other an intensive study of Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages and their literature, without excluding, if so desired, the study of other languages and literature, ancient and modern.

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5. The re-integration of Bharatiya Vidya, which is the primary object of Bharatiya Shiksha, can only be attained through a study of forces, movements, motives, iddas, forms and art of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process.

6. Bharatiya Shiksha must stimulate the student's power of expression, both written and oral, at every stage in accordance with the highest ideals attained by the great literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres.

7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

(a) the adoption by the teacher of the *Guru* attitude which consists in taking a personal interest in the student; inspiring and encouraging him to achieve distinction in his studies; entering into his life with a view to form ideals and remove psychological obstacles; and creating in him a spirit of consecration and

(b) th... A. ...dent of the *Shis*... by ... nse ... G... st ... respon ... teacher,

...spirit ... nquiry,

an ...

(iii) a spirit ... service towards the te... the ... institution, Bharat and Bharatiya Vic...

8. The ultimate aim of Bharatiya Shiksha is to ... younger generation to appreciate and live up to the ... values of Bharatiya Vidya which flowing from the su... ce... of creative life-energy as represented by Shri Ram... andra, Shri Krishna, Vyasa, Buddha and Mahavira have expressed themselves in modern times in the life of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

9. Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student, not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form or attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

—Rigveda, I.89. 1

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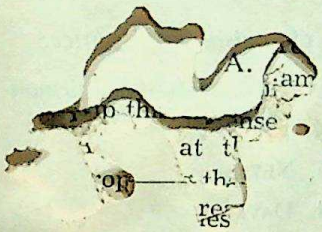

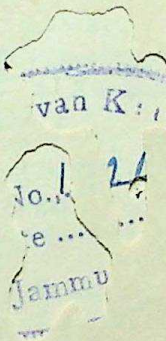

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PROBLEM OF HINDI — A STUDY

By

A. K. MAJUMDAR

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PROBLEM OF HINDI

A STUDY

By

A. [illegible]

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1965

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2.50.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the principal Indian languages : Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. In fact, we have already started publishing in Gujarat[illegible]

[illegible] at the same time, the

The [illegible] talking and publication of 900 volumes requires [illegible] and be India organisation. [illegible] victories of Bhavan is [illegible] itself to the utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are reintegration of Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit :

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions that allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so

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that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspirations which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books from other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, besides the movements of the Indian mind, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have [illegible] and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Bo[illegible] *Parman* [illegible] *Maha-bharata*, summarised [illegible] ans, Rajagopalachari; the s[illegible] 2.50 [illegible] it, the *a*, by H. V. Divatia, [illegible] udent of losophy. Centuries ag[illegible] ie *Maha-arata*: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five turies, we can use the same words about it. He who does know it does not know the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita*, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas the climax of which is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

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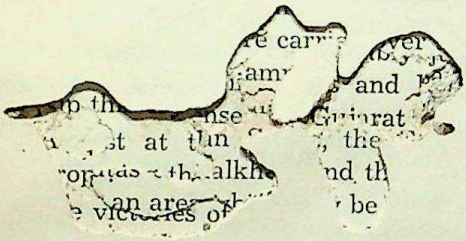
Through such books alone, the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD,
NEW DELHI :
October 3, 1951.

K. M. MUNSHI



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PREFACE

The Vivekananda Study Circle of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, induced me to deliver a lecture on "Language Problem and Indian Unity" in March last, and friends suggested that I should publish my lecture in the form of article. When the article was ready, I was encouraged to expand it, and the result is the present work.

In my lecture I did not suggest any solution of the language problem, nor do I now. The reason is that any solution is certain to offend the extremists of either party, and in any explosive situation, the extremists always get the leader[illegible] a group of neurotics. The political [illegible] and [illegible] as pressure group[illegible] to their number, [illegible] the [illegible] chief.

[illegible] the [illegible] and the [illegible] the victories of [illegible] or all who oppose them are pathological cases. But there are persons who want to impose Hindi immediately if necessary by force; they are certainly neurotics; their counterparts in the South are painstakingly purging Tamil of all Sanskrit words.

These gentlemen seem to have ignored an important fact of Indian history.

Buddhism and Jainism, the last great religious systems of North Indian origin, adopted North-Indian dialect in order to appeal to the masses; but Kumarila, and Sankara, who revived Hinduism came from the South and overthrew Buddhism through Sanskrit. And what is more remarkable is that all the great founders of the schools of Vedanta philosophy, namely, Ramanuja, Nim-

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barka, Madhva, and Vallabha were Southerners. Sri Chaitanya came from Bengal, but went to South to seek knowledge and settled at Puri, the place where North and South meet. This was made possible because Sanskrit was the language of the elite of the country.

It is evident, however, that religious unity, or cultural unity as it is euphemistically called by the secularly minded, is not enough. We must have political unity. For the lesson of history is that in spite of religious unity we were politically divided, of which advantage was taken of by the invading Muslim Turks.

Indeed our political unity has been the greatest achievement of modern India. The ancient Indians may have been superior [illegible] respects or even most [illegible]pects, but they [illegible] e country into one [illegible]ation. Mauryas p[illegible] d in do[illegible] but that was by autocrat[illegible]ds, m[illegible]d by [illegible]rangzib. Modern Ind[illegible]as be[illegible]mocra- process; this is with[illegible] paralle[illegible] of In- or indeed of any country of our [illegible] population.

Democracy implies a constant process of evolution ough persuasion. But the line dividing persuasion a..d coercion is very thin, and when an impatient majority begins to persuade an obdurate minority too energetically, the latter is bound to react as if coercive measures were used. This was understood by many members of the Constituent Assembly and the draft provisions of our Constitution which was made the basis of a pact by Dr. K. M. Munshi and Sri N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar was the result of a wise compromise. It is important to realize the ideas of Dr. Munshi and Sri Gopalaswamy; therefore I have given in the appendix extracts from their speeches on the language issue. The

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expectation of the Constitution makers have been belied, party at least, because the Constitutional provision for appointing a second Language Commission was ignored by the Government.

Another pertinent point is often overlooked. The idea of Hindi being the State language was started by Gandhiji during a phase of acute anti-British feeling. But the sentiment changed during the night of August 15, 1947, and now a generation has grown up with friendly feelings towards the Anglo-Americans and their language. This is particularly characteristic of the non-Hindi speaking provinces. Therefore some of the arguments which Gandhiji used in favour of introducing Hindustani are outdated now, and [illegible] could have been taken by the second Commission and [illegible] appointed.

[illegible] desire to stabilize the [illegible] This is the only way out of the [illegible] passe, [illegible] may be [illegible] value, if in the meantime the [illegible] expediency of encouraging the introduction of provincial languages in the Universities is adopted. The result will be that after about twenty or years graduates from one University will not be able to speak with the graduates of another University. Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee made the University of Calcutta famous as a seat of learning by collecting the best available talents from all over India such as, Dr. Ganesh Prasad from Bihar, Prof. D.R. Bhandarkar from Maharashtra, Sir C.V. Raman from Madras, and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan from Madras. This system of attracting famous scholars from outside the provincial boundaries became a tradition in the old Indian Universities, but soon it will die out. One can also envisage the day when

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the annual gathering of experts will be a thing of the past.

Our Universities were started by the British, and in the days of agitational politics came in for nationalist criticism for their proper refusal to take part in the 'movements'. Since then the politicians decided to purge the University of 'reactionary elements', and the result is the present condition. A drastic change in our mental attitude towards the Universities is necessary, and above all a firm decision to continue University education in English. One of our greatest heritage from the British Empire was the diffusion of English learning, which we seem to be scattering away. As has been said: "If English rule was the cl[illegible] wh[illegible] placed India under a [illegible]dow, the Engli[illegible] [illegible]he silver lining."

The retention [illegible] so necessary, if Hindi could [illegible]ly ren[illegible] in all [illegible]eres. But this was [illegible] co[illegible]ly one, therefore to maint[illegible] the pres[illegible] in our [illegible]demic life, English has to be retained as the medium [illegible]nstruction in the Universities. Already the standard [illegible]ducation has fallen low; the politicians have no idea o[illegible] the depth to which the standard will fall when their dream of introducing the provincial languages in the University is fully realized. But a popular reaction seems to have started against such patriotic madness, as shown in the recent municipal elections at Ahmedabad. It is also comforting to learn that in Coimbatore, a main centre of anti-Hindi pro-Tamil feeling, a college using the Tamil medium in which students were given a special grant to attend had to close down for lack of students.*

* G. H. Jansen: *Genuine Southern Concern for National Unity; Statesman*, 28-4-65.

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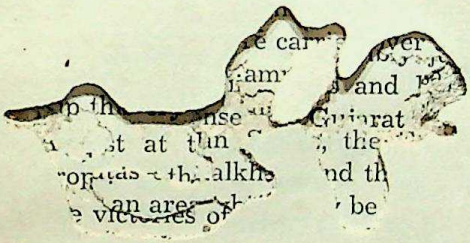
Time has come for a re-thinking and re-adjustment of mental attitudes in expectation of a new leadership. In the meantime we can only ponder over the historical forces that have led to the present enigma, and try to answer if we can, the eternal question of history, why it should have happened?

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
Bombay
October 27, 1965.

A. K. MAJUMDAR



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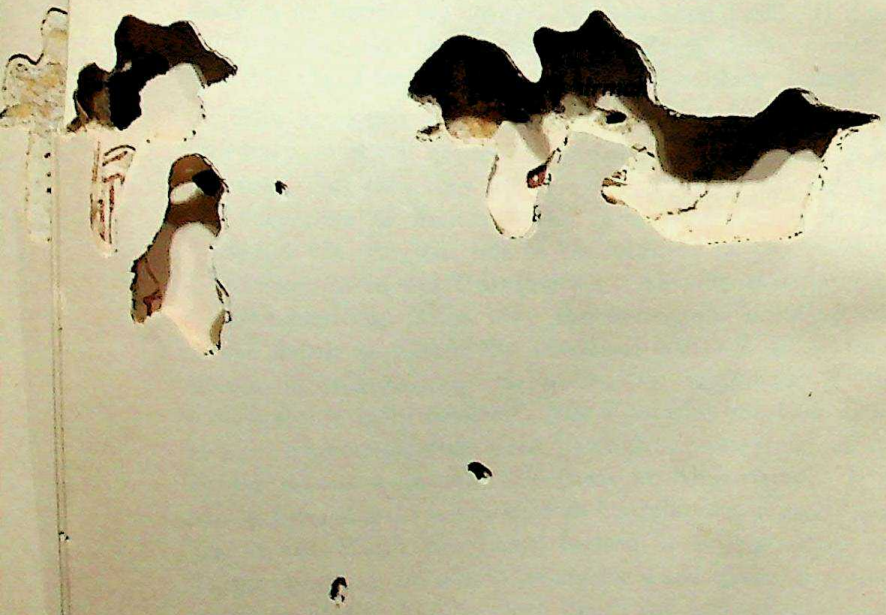

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL LANGUAGE

I

Indian nationalism was consciously developed on the pattern of 19th century European ideas of nationalism, in which language was supposed to have played a dominant part. It is true that language formed an important element in the development of the modern nation-states of Europe, but it was never the single nor the decisive factor in forming a nation-state. But to a group of Indian politicians from about 1920 onwards, Hindi became an article of faith. This attitude gave rise to bitter controversy and was a factor against unity in the Congress.

The opponents of Hindi rationalize their demands, on the following grounds:—

(1) Every nation has its own distinctive language,
(2) Common language promotes unity.
(3) India being a multilingual country, there must be a common Indian language for purposes of administration, etc.
(4) English being a foreign language cannot serve our purpose.

Every nation, however, does not have a common language. The example of Switzerland is famous. In 1954, the Ambassador of Yugoslavia told me that they had recognized all the three languages spoken in Yugoslavia as State languages with equal status, for it was found from experience that the single greatest factor in promoting separatist tendency was the imposition of the majority's language on the minorities.

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A common language does not necessarily make a nation. For example, in America all the Latin American and South American States excluding Brazil (but including Cuba) are Spanish speaking. Moreover they have a common religion, common culture, and racial affinities, still they are divided into more than twenty states, not very peacefully inclined towards each other. The second example is of the Arab States. There are 13 Arab States with common language, common religion and also racial affinity, and common culture. But they have been unable to form a nation, and even the integration of Egypt and Syria was unsuccessful.

It is clear therefore that neither is one language necessary to integrate a [illegible] into a nation nor is a common language [illegible] to other factors sufficient to integrate [illegible] nation.

There is no [illegible] ...ever ...ngual country like India must have ... ...age of administration. In this [illegible] be compared to that of the U.S.S.R.

'In the U.S.S.R. there are about 200 languages and dialects spoken by various linguistic or national groups. A large numbers out of this list of languages are, however, very little developed, and some of them are not in use and had never been in use as literary languages; yet others were furnished with a script only after the October Revolution. Amongst the more important languages of the U.S.S.R., of which there are some 16 or so, the Russian language has in all respects an outstanding position. Russian is the native language of nearly 100 million people inhabiting the U.S.S.R. out of a total of some 180 million, the other languages accounting for the whole lot of the rest. The most numerous language after the Russian is the Ukrainian accounting for 36.5

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million in the 1939 census and the next most numerous thereafter are: Bielorussian accounting for 8.7 million, Uzbek 4.9 million and Tatar 4.3 million. *Besides, throughout the history of Tsarist Russia, the Russian language had been used as the exclusive medium in education, political life and administration.* Russian is thus far and away the most outstanding language of the country, which of course changes entirely the relationship of this language with the other regional languages as compared with the Indian situation. It is generally recognized that no language other than the Russian, could play the part of a common language between the different States of the U.S.S.R.[1]

The Russian ex[illegible] carr[illegible] over[illegible] first sight tend [illegible]d favour Hindi. But [illegible]am[illegible]s and [illegible]e in the underlined [illegible]p th[illegible]nse[illegible] Gujarat [illegible]e taken into consideration at [illegible]t at this [illegible], the [illegible] had [illegible]d Russian on all people within t[illegible]an area [illegible]d Russ[illegible] be developed a great literature as victories of [illegible]ay in Europe. Thus Russian, before the revolution, had the same place in the Czarist empire as English in India. Hindi never had this advantage, nor did it develop to any appreciable extent.

In this connection it is interesting to note the example of Indonesia. In a national convention held in 1928, the Indonesians accepted a minority language as the national language, rejecting the claim of Javanese which occupies the place of Hindi in Indonesia. It is said that now they have succeeded in popularizing the minority language throughout the country.[2]

---

1. *Report of the Official Language Commission* (1956), pp. 13-14. Italics added.
2. Shri Vasudevan Nair: *Lok Sabha Debates*, Third Series, vol. XVIII, No. 51; col. 11908-09.

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II

For the purpose of our present study, a short account of our language-history may be of interest. We need not speculate about our early history, but take into consideration the facts which are well established.

Aśoka, the great Maurya Emperor, ruled practically the whole of India and all his edicts were issued in Pali and except in the north-west frontier, in the Brahmi script. But this had no lasting effect on India and certainly did not promote unity.

It should be noted that we do not know in which language the business of the law courts was carried on in the Maurya empire. From the fact that all the legal texts and their interpretations are in Sanskrit, it seems to be a good guess that Sanskrit was the 'language of law' even during the Maurya period. Thoughts could be expressed in Pali but it was the legal precision of Sanskrit. Pali in later times became beautiful religious songs composed in the language of the masses; but for discussing metaphysical problems Sanskrit alone was used, even by the Buddhists and the Jains.

The Gupta emperors adopted Sanskrit as the official language, which indeed was in use as official language before the Guptas. Sanskrit probably had ceased to be a 'mass language' even during Buddha's time, so it must have become more so during the Gupta and the succeeding periods. But it seems to have served the purpose quite well, though it is apparent that the 'mass' were unable to understand it.

Trouble arose after the fall of the Gupta empire. Harshavardhana, the great patron of Sanskrit, created an empire which included the area from Thaneswar to Kanauj, but this empire dissolved immediately after his

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death. The next empire in north India was formed by the Gūrjara-Pratihāras, which lasted for about two centuries, though their real power lasted for about a century. Their great rival, the Rāshṭrakūṭas, ruled for about 200 years. But the Pālas, who had their base in a linguistically homogeneous area ruled for about 400 years. Several other Indian dynasties also ruled for similarly long periods but it is significant that their hegemony began practically with the beginning of the N.I.A. period. (A.D. 1000) when the modern Indo-Aryan languages began to take their shape, and the dynastic kingdoms roughly corresponded to the linguistic areas.

It is equally significant that the enmities formed during this period were carried over to the Muslim period as well, the best example being the relation between Gujarat, Malwa and Deccan kingdoms.

Apart from these States, the Chālukyas of Badami, Rāshṭrakūṭas of Malkhed, and the Chālukyas of Kalyani ruled over an area which may be called multilingual, comprising of Telugu, Kannada and Marathi speaking areas, while the whole country south of the Tungabhadra was united by the imperial Choḷas. The main linguistic areas under the Choḷas were Tamilnad and Kerala but with the accesion of Kulottuṅga I (1070-1118) Telugu speaking areas were also included within the Choḷa empire. The result was, as Prof. Nilakanta Shastri says: "In many ways the age of the Choḷas and Chālukyas (900-1200) was the greatest epoch in the history of South India."[3] With the disappearance of the Chālukyas of Kalyani three linguistic states arose, Kākatīyas of Warangal (Telugu), Hoyśalas of Dvarasamudra (Kannada) and Yādavas of Devagiri (Marathi), while the Pāṇḍyas re-

3. K. A. Nilakanta Shastri: *A History of South India* (1955), p. 8.

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placed the imperial Cholas in Tamil-nad. Within one hundred years the Muslims from North India raided up to Ramesvaram and later established the Bahamani empire. Unity in Deccan was again imposed by the Bahamanis, but their empire too was fragmented the major portions falling to Bijapur, which included the Marathi speaking area, and Golkonda which was mainly a Telugu speaking area.

The Vijayanagara empire, formed almost at the same time, comprising the area south of the Tungabhadra, was in many ways a restoration of the Chola empire. The Vijayanagara empire, which successfully stemmed the tide of Muslim invasion in the South, was multilingual—Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam. But the Vijayanagara Emperors [illegible] the most enlightened linguistic policy [illegible] their merits irrespective of their medium of expression, [illegible] Sanskrit due status. Possibly under the [illegible] of constant conflict with the Muslim powers the Vijayanagara Emperors were forced to abolish the autonomy the villages had enjoyed under the Cholas. Instead the Vijayanagara Empire developed a highly centralized administration; this had its defects, but one can suppose that its merit had been to check the rise of parochial sentiments inherent in a multilingual state perpetually faced with external aggression. The result was that even after the fall of the Vijayanagara empire, the provincial Governors, or Nāyakas, put up sufficient resistance to ward off actual annexation to the Muslim kingdoms; this would not have been possible by the village panchayats.

It is interesting to note that in South India Prakrit continued to be the language of the inscriptions till about the 4th century A.D., and then Sanskrit was adopted as the sole language of official documents under the Ka-

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dambas, Gaṅgas and Pallavas for a period of two to three centuries. Later inscriptions are bilingual, employing Sanskrit generally at the beginning and at the end, and the local speech—Tamil, Telugu or Kannada—in the body of the document. From about the tenth century inscriptions composed in the local languages became very common, though Sanskrit retained its place as the medium of cultural intercourse.

The lesson of history therefore is that regional sentiments have developed for at least one thousand years and wherever possible, the language provided the common focus around which these sentiments grew.

This sentiment is reflected in all the historical texts available to us, and it is probably just as well that the Hindus were bad historians and [illegible] behind very few books to help [illegible] nse the Gujarat chronicles are revealing: a[illegible]t at these were written by pious Jain monks, who would not hurt a living creature, but they gloat over the victories of the Gujarat kings over their neighbours. Even the great Hemachandra hardly notices the Paramāra Bhoja; it is apparent that to the Gujarati Hemachandra the King of Malwa was just an enemy of his patron's ancestor. One Gujarati chronicler, namely Merutuṅga, refers feelingly to the Paramāra Emperors, and other Hindu kings without any bias. But Merutuṅga was writing after North India including Malwa and Gujarat had been conquered by the Muslims. National disaster had obliterated parochial sentiments. Narrow outlook dominates Kalhana also, whose historical horizon was confined within the limits of Kashmir.

III

When the nationalist movement first star[illegible] in India (middle of the 19th century) there was no [illegible]istically

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homogeneous province with the possible exception of Assam. Bengal meant Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; Uttar Pradesh included areas with different dialects, Hindi and Urdu; the Central Province was composed of Marathi, Hindi and Oriya speaking areas; Madras contained Tamil, Telugu and Oriya speaking areas; Bombay had Gujarati, Marathi and Kannada speaking areas; the Punjab was more homogeneous, but the Punjabis had sharp religious and other differences, and while Urdu was the common language of the Punjab, Gurumukhi was the sacred language of the Sikhs, and Hindi the language of the followers of the Arya Samaj.

In the earlier deliberations of the Congress there is no evidence of provincial rivalry. It was taken for granted that English should be medium of expression and an orator wherever he came from was acclaimed over the country. The province to which Pherozeshah Mehta or Surendranath Bannerji belonged seem to have mattered little. The partition of Bengal, and the Jallianwala bagh massacre were all-India issues, not merely the affairs of Bengal or the Punjab. These were the days when India was being united as a nation and politicians were used to thinking in terms of India.

Mahesh Narayan from Bihar demanded linguistic provinces in 1894, and this seems the earliest demand of this nature. Almost at the same time Muslim communal politics began to develop. Gandhiji and the Congress took the view that Communalism was bad but provincialism was legitimate, though both the sentiments, communalism and provincialism, developed out of the same urge, namely, to secure more jobs in one case for the community, in other for the provincials. One identifies oneself with a community or a linguistic group oblivious of the bigger reality, India. One of the rea-

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sons for Bihar's demand for separation from Bengal was that in those days when Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were grouped together (called Bengal), the Bengalis with their better knowledge of English as also due to the fact that the seat of the Government was located at Calcutta, virtually monopolized the Government jobs. But it should be remembered that large number of Bengali Hindus had been appointed to government posts in Bihar and Orissa by the Muslim governments since the days of Murshid Quli Khan in the 18th century for political reasons. However, the Biharis felt that the preponderance of Bengalis in government service in Bihar was a cause of legitimate grievance, which later developed into the slogan "Bihar for Biharis" and this attitude was justified even by Dr. Rajendra Prasad.[4] Other provinces took up this cry later.

At about the same time that Hrishikesh Narayan was proposing the separation of Bihar from Bengal, some prominent Oriya leaders were petitioning the Government to bring all the Oriya speaking people under one provincial administration, as the Oriya speaking districts were then distributed amongst Bengal, Central Provinces and Madras. One of the main reasons, given by the Government of India, for the partition of Bengal, was that it would have enabled them to place all the Oriya speaking districts under one administration.[5]

Thus language became a live issue in Indian politics when Bengal was partitioned in 1905. In 1911, it was repartitioned, and Bihar and Orissa were separated from Bengal, and in 1937, Orissa was separated from Bihar.

4. Rajendra Prasad: *Autobiography* (1957), p. 4. See also ibid, p. 57.
5. For details see A. K. Majumdar: *Advent of Independence*, p. 31 and pp. 328-35.

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It is interesting to note that in the 1920's both the Congress and the British Government favoured linguistic provinces and Lord Attlee told me in 1960 that his main contribution to the Simon Commission Report was the separation of Orissa from Bihar.

Lord Attlee's opinion was based on his European experience, namely, that if a linguistic community forms a viable group, it should be allowed to manage its own affairs, and political settlement to the contrary would be coercion. This view appears unexceptionable, but it has always seemed to me that the solution of an Indian political problem on the analogy of historical precedents drawn from Europe is fraught with danger. However linguistic states also received support from Gandhiji and the Congress, and when at last after 1947, the Congress Government wa[illegible] to maintain the multilingual States of Bombay and [illegible]ras, it was too late. In B[illegible]y, for example, the [illegible]ress had been divided into Maharashtra P.C. [illegible] little. [illegible]ne Gujarat P.C.C. for a long time. If the politic[illegible]y had to be split up, they could hardly expect the people to remain content under a united administration.

The Draft Constitution of India envisaged the separation of Andhra from Madras. But the Constitution did not separate the two States which led to serious trouble and Andhra had to be separated, just as Gujarat and Maharashtra had to be separated. Linguistic passion had been stirred by decades of political propaganda; at last when the time for action arrived the Congress leaders understood their mistake, but instead of courageously admitting it, they followed a policy of non-action. The grim res[illegible] was inevitable. But the incidents in Assam have sho[illegible] that we had not till then seen the limits of linguistic lan[illegible]aticism.

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However, the linguistic States have come to stay and it is hardly of any use to criticize their formation. But the danger inherent in linguistic States is that these States will form the focus of allegiance and an ordinary citizen may fail to perceive that he owes primary allegiance to India.

This should be examined in the background of our history, where the centrifugal forces have proved to be more powerful than the centripetal forces, and divided the country into regional States. The British united the country by force, and then maintained the unity by an unified administrative system using English as the language of administration both in the centre and in the provinces.

IV

Hindi does not claim to replace English in all the spheres, for that would run counter to the theory on which linguistic States have been formed. Thus State languages are expected to become the official language of the States.

Introduction of State languages as administrative medium will mean administrative segregation. Before 1947, an I.C.S. officer was rarely posted in his home province. The reason is obvious. For some time, however, the States have been demanding that only officers belonging to that particular State should be posted there. This demand will increase and become quite legitimate when the administration is carried on in the local language. This in its turn will revive the demand for a quota system in the recruitment of all-India services. Or at present some 'languages' are under-represented in the services. Once this stand is taken by provincial politicians,

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it will be impossible to stop, for this clamour for Government services has a long history behind it. The main grievance of the early nationalist leaders was for greater Indianization of the services, and Muslims also made their inadequate representation in Government services a main plank in their communal propaganda which ultimately led to Pakistan, and, as we have stated, the beginning of linguistic provinces was based on a desire for Government jobs. Once the cry of Provincial representation of services is taken up seriously it will not be sufficient to point out that unqualified people will lower the administrative efficiency; for, to this the ready-made answer will be "Good Government is no substitute for self-Government." And once administrative officers are recruited on the basis of State quota, their attitude will be determined by provincial considerations just as the Muslim officials before 1947 were motivated by communal considerations. little.

V

The anti-English bias was to a certain extent unavoidable during the period of national resistance; Gandhiji precipitated the issue and it seems that in some quarters his views on language are accepted as infallible, in almost the same pathetic faith in which an orthodox man looks towards the scriptures for his guidance. Now circumstances have changed and with them the validity of certain opinions held by Gandhiji. For example, Sri Rajagopalachari, one of the greatest Gandhi-ites, as Chief Minister of Madras forced Hindi, in spite of considerable opposition, in all the schools with apparent success.[6] It is impossible that Rajaji fortified Gandhiji's faith

6. See below pp. 46-47 for a graphic description of the opposition to the introduction of Hindi by Rajaji.

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in the ultimate success of Hindi as the official language. For, at that time Madras included Andhra, and as there was no separate Kannada or Malayalam speaking State, Rajaji's action signified that entire South India had accepted Hindi. But now Rajaji has come out most vigorously against Hindi, and demands a change in the Constitution. It is apparent therefore that the situation which formed Gandhiji's opinion has changed, and possibly he himself would have changed his opinion—as he did on many political issues under changed circumstances.

Time has therefore come to ponder over the language issue with a fresh mind. It is evident that the solutions offered up to now have failed to meet the situation. Some new solution will have to be evolved, and possibly it will come from the future generation; for the present generation of politicians have exhausted their resources, and the country, faisten with invasion, can ill afford to divert its energies to blem long term solution of the language problem. The munica can do, therefore, is not to create further difficu but let the present situation continue till it improves to an extent when unprejudiced discussion of the problem will become possible.

VI

Before the advent of the printing press, Sanskrit MSS. used to be written in provincial scripts. (The notion that Sanskrit can only be written in Nagari script is entirely wrong.) However, by a process of mutual understanding among scholars, Sanskrit boo all over India were printed in the Nagari script. It not yet clear as to how this understanding was arr at, but it was an enormous help in spreading the k edge of

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Sanskrit, for texts printed in any part of India could be read anywhere else.

This reminds me what happens when politicians come into the picture. For transliteration of Sanskrit into Roman script, several systems were in use formerly, so the scholars gathered at the International Congress of Orientalists in 1886 and adopted a particular system after long deliberation. The Government of India adopted it with slight modifications, and these two systems are now used throughout the world. However, Rajaji has apparently preferred a new system. He even does not use a macron which the Oxford Dictionary has defined as "mark placed over vowel (ā) to show that it is long." Rajaji's system may serve his particular purpose, but the danger is that others may be tempted to devise other methods to su[illegible]ir particular needs, resulting in a chaos.

This ex[illegible]e is given to illustrate the danger of politician[illegible]ding into academic matters, which these days have [illegible]me very common particularly in the field of linguistics. Undoubtedly the language problem is a political problem but it is also an academic problem, but the scholars up to now have not been able to make themselves heard, and now possibly the scholars are not entirely free from political bias.

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CHAPTER II

HISTORY

I

The movement for the adoption of Hindi as the State language began as an agitation for the substitution of Urdu with Hindi, somewhat similar to the present demand of replacing English with Hindi.

The earliest record of the Hindi-Urdu controversy that I have come across is a pamphlet containing the proceedings of the Nynee Tal Institute of August 28, 1869. On that day one Baboo Boodhee Bullubh Punt delivered a virulently anti-Urdu speech at the Institute. It is interesting to note that Boodhee Bullubh's criticisms against the modified Arabic script (popularly called Urdu script) was particularly severe, and after the meeting one Mr. D'Gruyther suggested the use of Roman script.

Thereafter, Mr. Gunga Dutt Pant, the President, addressed the meeting and the pamphlet records: "The President was of opinion that as Urdu only took its rise on the conquest of the country by the Muhammedans, and as it was simply for the convenience of the said conquerors that it was introduced, now that the Muhammedans have in their turn been conquered by a race talking neither Urdu nor Hindi, the natural language of the country should be reverted to, viz. Hindi....." He then added that most of the litigant public being agriculturists, who knew no Urdu, Hindi should be the court language.

There were several Muslims present at the meeting; while all of them urged that the use of Urdu should be continued, all the Hindus were in favour of the change over

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to Hindi. Copies of the lecture and discussion were forwarded to the Commissioner of Kumaon with a request that if he deemed it proper, the proceedings might be submitted to the Government, and a copy was also sent to the D.P.I. for information.[1]

II

Hindi was used deliberately for mass communication for the first time by Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj. It appears, however, that Dayananda was induced to use Hindi by Keshab Chandra Sen, the great religious leader. Dayananda's biographer writes:

"It was here at Calcutta that Swami Dayanand realized the necessity of discontinuing lecturing in Sanskrit for the future. He could not but see that he was not always interpreted faithfully, and that by speaking in Sanskrit he could *directly* reach but the *minority*. Baboo Keshab Chandra Sen is said to have hinted to him as such, a little. He resolved that henceforward his public lectures should be, if possible, invariably in *Arya Bhasha* (Hindi)...."[2]

The reason which prompted Keshab Chandra to suggest Hindi as the medium of communication must have been his ignorance of Sanskrit and Dayananda's of English.[3] It may be presumed therefore that they conversed

1. Tract Volume 640. Commonwealth (formerly India Office) Library, London.
2. Bawa Chhajju Singh, *The Life And Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, (Lahore, 1903), Part I, p. 197. Swami Dayanand arrived at Calcutta in December 1872 and left on April 1, 1873.
3. "Then came Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen who did not know the Sanskrit language and had not studied the Hindu scriptures." Sivanath Sastri: *The Mission of the Brahmo Samaj: The Theistic Church of Modern India* (Calcutta, 1910), p. 90. This is corroborated by Bawa Chhajju Singh, op. cit., p. 198.

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in Hindi, which both of them are likely to have picked up during their North Indian tours.

The effect of Dayananda's adoption of Hindi as the *Arya Bhasha* was most conspicuous in the Punjab where his followers had to struggle against Urdu. Obviously, inspired by Dayananda, one Lala Dwarka Das, M.A., published a pamphlet called *Hindi versus Urdu* under the auspices of the *Bhasha Pracharini Sabha*, Lahore, in 1882.[4] We have no information about this Sabha, but Dwarka Das presented a strong case for Hindi in Nagari script and claimed that only 10 per cent of the people in the Punjab spoke Urdu. Dwarka Das was also against Gurumukhi, which, he said, possessed no literature and was written in a defective script. Dwarka Das made an interesting reference to Rajendra Lal Mitra, presumably the famous Bengali Indologist, who, according to Dwarka Das, had spoken very highly of Hindi literature and particularly praised the Nagari script.

Dwarka Das was an active Arya Samajist and here probably we see the beginning of the linguistic controversy in the Punjab which has not yet died down.[5]

Thus the Hindi-Urdu controversy spread over the Hindi speaking provinces of North India including Bihar, where the Bengali officials took a prominent part in replacing Urdu with Hindi. The reason which prompted the Bengalis to prefer Hindi was obvious: the Sanskrit

4. Lala Dwarka Das, M.A.: *Hindi versus Urdu;* published under the auspices of the Bhasha Pracharini Sabha, Lahore 1882. Tract Volume 640; Commonwealth (formerly India Office) Library, London.
5. Presumably this Lala Dwarka Das is identical with Lala Dwarka Das, M.A., Pleader, Chief Court Punjab, who wrote the introduction to Bawa Chhajju Singh's biography of Swami Dayananda referred to above. Chhajju Singh's biography informs us that Dwarka Das was the President, Punjab Arya Samaj, Ambala in 1903.

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books at this time were usually printed in Nagari and therefore the Bengalis, most of whom knew Sanskrit, preferred Hindi in Nagari script to Urdu in Arabic script. Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya took a leading part in introducing Hindi in Bihar, and it is said that Pramada Charan Mitra, a judge of the Allahabad High Court, performed similar service for Hindi in U.P., though not with equal success.

III

The Gaekwad of Baroda, in his Presidential address to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in 1934, advocated for the first time the use of Hindi as an all-India language. He had already introduced Gujarati as the official language of Gujarat so that he might be said to have introduced these in [illegible]. For still the problem that remained was not English [illegible] Hindi but Urdu or Hindi and there was an undercurrent of communalism in Hindi-Urdu controversy. [illegible] little. [illegible]sition was challenged by Gandhiji, who, from the beginning of his political career in India, adopted an anti-English attitude. It may be recalled that Mahesh Narayan[6] of Bihar demanded linguistic redistribution of provinces in the Congress Session of 1894 and the principle was accepted by the Congress in 1917 with Tilak's blessings. In 1918, Gandhiji came out in support of linguistic provinces and Hindustani as the national language. Unfortunately, Gandhiji's opinion seems to have been based more on emotions than rationality. For example in one of his earliest speeches on *Swadeshi* he declared:

"We [illegible]e laboured under a terrible handicap owing to an al[illegible] fatal departure from the Swadeshi spirit.

6. Editor [illegible]e *Bihar Times*.

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We, the educated classes, have received our education through a foreign tongue. We have, therefore, not reacted upon the masses. We want to represent the masses, but we fail. They recognize us not much more than they recognize the English officers. Their hearts are an open book to neither. Their aspirations are not ours. Hence there is a break. And you witness not in reality failure to organize but want of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. If during the last fifty years we had been educated through the vernaculars, our elders and our servants and our neighbours would have partaken of our knowledge; the discoveries of a Bose or a Ray would have been household treasures as are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. As it is, so far as the masses are concerned, those great discoveries might as well have been made by foreigners. If instruction in all the branches of learning been given through the vernaculars, I make bold to say that they would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of communicative sanitation, etc., would have been solved long ago. The village panchayats would be now a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying self-government suited to its requirements, and would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of organized assassination on its sacred soil. It is not too late to mend.....'"[7]

Now, the first part of this passage is a correct analysis of the position, namely, that, the masses of India will never be influenced by English, or for that matter, by any language except their mother-tongue.[8]

7. D. G. Tendulkar *Mahatma*, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, I, pp. 227-28.
8. Of Gandhiji's native land it was long ago said [illegible] the Paramara Emperor Bhoja.
Śrinvanti Lāṭabhaṁ Lātāh Prākṛitam Sam[illegible]-dvishe Apabhraṁsena tushyanti svena nānyena G[illegible]ge, pīh, Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa (1884), II, v. 13.

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But then, like many mass leaders, Gandhiji seems to have been carried away by the emotion of his appeal, and made the astounding claims, that if Sir J.C. Bose or Sir P.C. Ray had written their theses in Bengali, their works would have become household treasures (if not in India at least in Bengal). No one ever asked Gandhiji as to why the British mass, or even those among the British educated class, who were not versed in science, were (and are) ignorant of scientific subjects? Why did not all the educated Indians read the Vedas and Upanishads, which were then available in translation in most of the Indian languages? And far more important was the question, could Sir J. C. Bose and Sir P. C. Ray have made their scientific discoveries had they been ignorant of English? The answer is obvious, and makes the strongest case for English education.

Gandhiji's [illegible]n concern, however, was not with higher education, but with a medium of all-India mass contact, [illegible]. In 1918 he defined his position which he maintained for the rest of his life. He declared:

"There is not another language capable of competing with Hindi. Bengali comes next to Hindi. But the Bengalis themselves make use of Hindi outside Bengal.[9] No one wonders to see a Hindi-speaking man making use of Hindi, no matter where he goes. Hindu preachers and Muslim maulvis deliver their religious discourses throughout India in Hindi and Urdu, and even the illi-

9. However, Gandhiji seems to have changed his mind about Bengal, for in February 1921, he wrote in *Young India:* "Bengal and Madras are the two provinces that are cut off from the rest of India for want of a knowledge of Hindustani on their part. Bengal, because of its prejudice against learning any other language of India, and Madras because of the difficulty of the Dravidians about picking up Hindustani." *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*, published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras, 3rd ed., p. 801.

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terate masses follow them. Even the unlettered Gujarati going to the north attempts to use a few Hindi words, whereas a gate-keeper from the north declines to speak in Gujarati even to his employer, who has on that account to speak to him in broken Hindi.[10] I have heard Hindi spoken in the Dravid country. It is not true to say that in Madras one can go on with English. Even there I have employed Hindi with effect. In the trains I have heard Madras passengers use Hindi. It is worthy of note that Muslims throughout India speak Urdu[11] and they are to be found in every province. Thus Hindi is destined to be the national language. We have made use of it as such in times gone by. The rise of Urdu itself is due to that fact. The Muslim kings were unable to make Persian or Arabic the national language of India. They accepted the Hindi grammar, and employed the Urdu script and Persian words in their speeches."

Dealing with the question of script problem, he added: "For the time being Muslim children will communicate write in the Urdu character, and Hindus will mostly write in Devanagari script. I say mostly, because thousands of Hindus use the Urdu character and some do not even know Devanagari. But when the Hindus and Muslims come to regard one another without suspicion, when the causes begetting suspicion are removed, the script which has greater vitality will be more universally used, and, therefore, become the national script.[12]

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10. Gandhiji may have overlooked one significant point. The north Indian gate-keepers usually were Brahmins while their Gujarati employers were usually Banias. So the Brahmin servants received certain unusual marks of respect from their employers which cannot be explained except in the larger context of the Hindu society.
11. This is the usual fallacy, for Gandhiji incl[illegible]nd Bengali Muslims also. I have discussed this later.
12. Tendulkar, op. cit. I, pp. 275-76.

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This was in 1918. About this time Gandhiji wrote to Rabindranath Tagore for his advice and the Poet replied to him:—

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I can only answer in the affirmative the question you have sent to me from Motihari. Of course, Hindi is the only possible national language for interprovincial intercourse in India. But about its introduction in the Congress, I think we cannot enforce it for a long time to come. In the first place, it is truly a foreign language for the Madras people, and in the second, most of our politicians will find it extremely difficult to express themselves adequately in this language for no fault of their own. The difficulty will be not only for want of practice but also because political thoughts have naturally taken form in our n[illegible] in English. So, Hindi will have to remain optional in our national proceedings until a new generation of politicians, fully alive to its importance, pave the way towards its general use by constant practice as a voluntary acceptance of a national obligation.[13]

This seems to have had some effect, for next year (1919) Gandhiji wrote in the *Young India:*

"Whilst, therefore, I hold it to be the duty of every English-knowing Indian to translate the best of the English thought in the vernaculars for the benefit of the masses, I recognize that for a few years to come, until we have accepted Hindustani as the common medium among the cultured classes and until Hindustani becomes compulsory in our schools as a second language, educated India, especially in the Madras Presidency, must be addressed in English."[14]

However, he also wrote in the same issue:

13. Published in the *Compass* (Bengali weeky) March 13, 1965, p. 29.
14. Tendulkar, *op. cit.*, I, p. 325.

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"The Hon. Mr. Sinha whilst he was speaking on the Indemnity Bill was led into a confusion of terms. He was pulled up by Sir George Lowndes, and His Excellency the President defended Mr. Sinha saying it was a slip of the tongue. Mr. Sinha then made these frank and dignified remarks. 'It is hard for Your Excellency to realize what our difficulties are in speaking a foreign tongue in this council. We are apt to make mistakes'. This is only too true. We are apt to make mistakes in our own mother tongue. But they are never so ludicrous as when we attempt to speak in a foreign tongue. Professor Jadunath Sarkar has remarked that our having to speak and think in English puts a strain upon us from which we never fully recover.[15] The remedy for the evil is that we must begin self-government by introducing our own speech in our assemblies, provincial vernaculars in the provincial legislature, sister Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu, in the Imperial Council. We cannot make a better beginning than communicating the change in the Congress and the conferences. In adopting English as the medium at these gatherings we have done a positive disservice to the masses who have but a vague idea of the proceedings of these annual gatherings. By persisting to conduct them in English we have actually put obstacles in the way of these masses getting political education. I imagine what would have happened if we had during the thirty-five years' existence of the National Congress deliberated in Hindustani instead of English which is understood only by a microscopic minority of our countrymen."[16]

15. It is interesting to note that Sir Jadunath Sarkar knew the following languages: Sanskrit, Persian, French, Arabic German. The strain of learning so many languages does not seem to have had any effect on his great historical writings.
16. Tendulkar, op. cit. I, pp. 323-24.

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None had the temerity to point out, that had the Indian National Congress started with those ideas, it would have become another *Bhasha Pracharini Sabha* of Lahore, which for all we know, probably ended its existence after publishing a thirteen page pamphlet. For, in the political mist created by Gandhiji's enthusiasm for Hindi (later Hindustani), his followers—mainly from the Hindi speaking provinces—started the fashion of criticizing the early Congress leaders, totally forgetting the great service they had rendered by institutionalizing the political aspirations of the people into a unified corporate body.[17] Gandhiji calmly took the result of the labours of his predecessors namely, all-India political cohesion, as granted, and began to find new methods for strengthening the bonds of unity by bringing the masses into the movement. Very soon he had to face the Hindi-Urdu controversy. Had he remained in India during the early decades of his career which he spent in South Africa, little. would have known of this problem before he opened his Hindi campaign.

Another factor entered into the propagation of Hindi. Gandhiji writes: "I had seen, in the course of my travels, that cow protection and Hindi propaganda had become the exclusive concern of the Marwadis."[18] However worthy the cause may have been the linking up of cow protection with Hindi, gave it, in spite of Gandhiji's patronage, a communal colour of which the Muslims took

17. Shri R. V. Dhulekar (United Provinces) said in the Constituent Assembly during the language debate: "This English language has produced no great man.... Only those people joined the freedom's fight who forgot the English language." *Constituent Assembly Debates*, September 13, 1949, Vol. IX, p. 1349. This is a typical example.

18. M. K. Gandhi: *Autobiography*, tr. by M. Desai, Standard Edition, p. 314.

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the fullest advantage. And the Marwadi patronage was not without its drawbacks. The Marwadis are noted for their business acumen but their contribution to higher learning and literature have been so insignificant that the intelligentsia from the non-Hindi speaking areas were not likely to be persuaded by their propaganda. The *Hindi Prachāra Samitis* were organized on business principles, and they yielded good results according to any business standard by turning out increasingly larger number of Hindi diploma holders from all over India, particularly the South. But in the Hindi controversy, that was reserved for the future, the degree holders of the Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti, numbering several *lacs*, did not play any part at all.

However, as already stated, movement for Hindi had started with a view to replace Urdu. [illegible] the issue was communal, if we look at it from our sistelsent point of view. But in the 19th century, when the Hindi-Urdu agitation started, the motive was to replace muni[illegible]anguage of the oppressive ex-rulers, that is, a feeling akin to the modern anti-English attitude. The Muslims soon discovered that Urdu was their mother tongue, and Muslims included the Bengali Muslims also, who it can be said without exaggeration, did not understand a word of Urdu, with the exception of a few like Maulana Azad, who did not understand Bengali. But at this time Gandhiji had launched the Khilafat movement and come under the influence of the Urdu speaking Muslims, who convinced him that the Indian Muslims would never accept Hindi. Therefore, Gandhiji changed his position slightly and began to advocate Hindustani, which, as defined by him would be a mixture of Hindi and Urdu and therefore easily intelligible to the masses.

Gandhiji later severed his connections with the

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Hindi Sāhitya Sammelan, over whose deliberations he had presided in 1918. However, in 1925 he attended the Hindi Sāhitya Sammelan and made it an occasion to chastise the 'artificial language used in most of the addresses.' He said: "Highly Sanskritized Hindi is as avoidable as highly Persianized Urdu. Both the speeches are not intelligible to the masses. I have accepted Hindustani as a common medium because it is understood by over twenty crores of people in India. This is not the artificial Lucknavi Urdu or the *sammelani* Hindi. And one would expect at least a *sammelan* address to be such as would be understood by both Hindus and Muslims of the common type. The animal who if he pronounces the name Ishwar dreads to pronounce the name Khuda, or the one who would pronounce the name Khuda but would regard [illegible] sinful to utter the name Ishwar, is not an attractive [illegible]."[19]

In his [illegible]dress to uplift the masses, Gandhiji would have little [illegible] vocabulary of the literate class, and yet dreamt of the day when Hindi literature would produce a Rabindranath. Apparently Gandhiji was ignorant of Rabindranath's highly Sanskritized Bengali, and his

19. Tendulkar, op. cit. II, p. 273. From a broad humanitarian point of view there is of course no difference, but Gandhiji was speaking here as an utilitarian. However, he was much nearer the truth than he probably suspected. For according to some *Khudā* is derived from *Khwud*=self and *āy*=coming, while according to others it is related to Sanskrit *sva-datta*=self given, i.e. self-created. The point which Gandhiji overlooked, however, is that *Khuda* is a Persian word, and the Muslims have to use the Arabic word Allah during their prayers; any interference with this practice is gross heresy. The reason is that human nature always clings to a particular word when referring to God. Thus, Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609), who was the first to classify the European languages based his classification on the words for *god: deus* (Latin, Romance) *theos* (Greek); *gott* (Germanic); and *bog* (Slavonic). This basis is no longer used but the classification [illegible]

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habit of using long compounds, longer even than those usually employed by Kālidāsa.[20]

Gandhiji's obsession with a popular speech is very well reflected in the following passage which he wrote in his foreword to Sri K. M. Munshi's *Gujarāta And Its Literature:* "Shri Munshi's estimate of our literary achievement appears to me to be very faithful. The survey naturally confines itself to the language understood and spoken by the middle class. Commercially-minded and self-satisfied, their language has naturally been 'effiminate and sensuous'. Of the language of the people we know next to nothing. We hardly understand their speech. The gulf between them and us the middle class, is so great that we do not know them and they know still less of what we think and speak.... (the folk songs) are the literature of the [illegible]."

20. The most well-known example is our Nat[illegible] Anthem where the first line is actually a compound of six[illegible], *Jana-gaṇa-mana-adhināyaka—Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhāta.* [illegible]ise this compound is found to be easy, I would a[illegible] readers to ponder over the following which is found in the same song but not included in the Anthem, though this lifts the song to its full philosophical height:

patana-abhuydaya — bandhura-panthā
yuga-yuga — dhāvita-yātri.
he chira-sārathi tava ratha-chakre
mukharita patha dina-rātri.

And here is Rabindranath's invocation to Sarasvatī:

Prakāśo jananī nayana-samukhe
prasanna-mukha-chhabi.
Vimala-mānasa-sarasa-vāsinī
Śuklavasanā śubhra-hāsinī
Vīṇā-gañjita-mañju-bhāshiṇī
Kamala-kuñj-āsanā.

It may be said that Rabindranath did not *always* use such compounds, but the fact is that he did it so frequently as to have made Sanskrit words a part of Bengali vocabulary, and as a result today a Bengali writer is free to use [illegible] Sanskrit word however obscure.

There is a common fallacy that Rabindranath[illegible]orks are understood by the Bengali masses. Nothing ca[illegible] further from the truth.

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Only a Gandhi could have classified Narsi Mehta and Mira Bai as belonging to the 'commercially-minded and self-satisfied' middle class. Actually as is well-known, the middle Gujarati literature, which is described in detail by Dr. Munshi in his work, presents us with an *embarrass de richesse*, but Gandhiji, intent only on mass contact, dismissed it as of little account. This attitude has to be taken into account whenever Gandhiji's opinion is cited or discussed.

IV

The most popular definition of language is that it is a means of verbal communication. In this sense Gandhiji's selection of simple Hindustani as the all-India language would be justified if indeed such a language had existed. But the fact is that grammatically Urdu and Hindi are the same, though separate Urdu grammar based on Arabic and Persian has been written. The main difference is in the two languages is their vocabulary, Hindi drawing on Sanskrit and Urdu on Persian and Arabic. This is due to the peculiar nature of the modern Indian languages the vocabulary of all of which may be grouped as follows: Sanskrit *(tatsama)*, Sanskrit derivatives (*tad-bhava*), *deśī* (indigenous or those words which are peculiar to a dialect) foreign loan words (Persian, Arabic, Spanish, English etc.) The characteristics of the Deśī words are that they cannot form new words for which one has to rely either on Sanskrit or on Arabic unless English is drawn upon.

Now, so much has been said against the Hindi 'purists' from Gandhiji onwards, that an explanation of their attitude may be given. To a Hindu, Persian and Arabic in spite of their great literature were as foreign as English is to all the Indians. The argument against

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English, namely that it is not understood by common man, is equally applicable, not only to Persian and Arabic but also to Urdu, for in spite of the image created by many popular leaders of Urdu being the second language of U.P. and Bihar, the fact is that it is not understood by ordinary Biharis at all, though it was imposed as their court language for a long time. In U.P. only the educated people understand Urdu. The myth that Urdu was the language of the Muslims has been exploded after the formation of Pakistan. In 1947 Urdu was declared to be the official language of Pakistan, but ultimately Bengali in Bengali script had to be accepted as another official language. And judging by the Bengali of Pakistan Radio and some Pakistani journals, it is apparent that Pakistani Bengali is as much Sanskrit ridden as non-Pakistani Bengali. This shows conclusively that adoption of Sanskritized Hindi need not necessarily ousister the susceptibilities of the Indian Muslims. If, howblem, the Indian Muslims desire to preserve their separamunicatity, and identify themselves with the foreign conquerors of India, no amount of argument will convince them.

But the fact remains that Indian cultural values cannot be expressed in Perso-Arabic. As Gandhiji said there is really no difference in meaning between Īśvara and Khuda. But suppose we want to use the word Maheśvara, which the Hindus use every day. Shall the word Khudabuzurg convey the same meaning? And how to express Maheśvarī in Urdu? These are practical difficulties, which neither Gandhiji nor any politician thought about. Gandhiji once asked Maulana Azad to suggest equivalents for the words 'non-violent' and 'non-co-operation', and the latter suggested *ba-amn* and *tark-i-mavalat*.[21] Gandhiji may have used these words for

21. Gandhi, op. cit. 367.

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addressing Muslim crowds, but the words for non-co-operation was *a-saha-yog* in Bengali and Hindi, and *a-saha-kär* in Gujarati, both being Sanskrit derivatives. Gandhiji, in spite of his denials, was a great writer, and never tried to impose the words suggested by Maulana Azad, for he must have understood that *ba-aman* and *tark-i-mavalat* in any Indian language except Urdu, were not only aesthetically unsatisfactory, but slightly repulsive.

This problem of selection of words faced all the Indian writers during the nineteenth century when the modern north-Indian literatures (particularly prose) were in the process of formation. Bengali was the first amongst them to take a definite shape, and it is said that being the creation of Sanskrit Pandits of the Fort William College, became not only highly Sanskritized, but also cleansed of foreign loan words as far as practicable. But it is remarkable that Raja Rammohan Roy, the father of Bengali prose, in spite of his profound knowledge of Arabic and Persian, preferred to write in a highly Sanskritized language. Other north-Indian language, Gujarati, for example, followed the same pattern, that is retained as few foreign loan words as possible, but borrowed extensively from Sanskrit. Like Bengali prose, Hindi prose owes its origin to the formation of the Fort William College where Lalluji Lal of Agra (1763-1835) wrote the *Prem-sāgar* in 1803. But modern Hindi was placed on a secure footing by Bhāratendu Harischandra (1846-1884). He was a versatile writer of genius but translated several Bengali works; this work of translation from Bengali continued and Hindi prose style was modelled to a large extent on Bengali. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the same cultural impulse which inspired Bengali, working in the Hindi

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speaking area should have produced the same result, that is Sanskritized Hindi. The objection was that U.P. and Bihar contained a Muslim population who understood only Urdu so the Sanskritized Hindi should be given up. This objection could hardly appear valid to the Hindus of these areas, for while the percentage of Muslims in U.P was about 15, and in Bihar even less, the Muslims formed the majority in Bengal. If the Muslim majority in Bengal could adopt the so-called language of the Hindu minority, why the minority in U.P. and Bihar should have objected to it? The Turks, for whose benefit the Indian Muslims launched the Khilafat movement, are perfectly satisfied with Turkish in Roman script, that is free from Perso-Arabic influence.

Gandhiji however, in his eagerness to accommodate the reactionary Muslims as far as possible attempted to steer a middle course. Hence his insistence on Hindustani which would have solved the problem, if the only use of language had been verbal communication with the masses. But language has been put to other uses from time immemorial.

It has been calculated that in all modern European languages, a basic vocabulary of seventeen hundred native words is sufficient for ordinary conversation and even intelligent discussion of serious subjects. But to read widely without a dictionary one needs a 'nodding acquaintance' with roughly fifteen thousand words and a general familiarity with a wide range of grammatical conventions.[22] Many linguists would disagree with this calculation, and secondly, this applies to Europe. But the existence of a wide gap between the number of vocables necessary for verbal communication and literary

22. F. Bodmer and L. Hogben, *The Loom of Language*, pp. 24; 29.

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communication is evident. This gap is to be found in every language and education is intended to fill it. India has the longest literary tradition in world-history, so that though her modern literatures were of comparatively recent origin, their vocabularies soon assumed a respectable size. The other languages were allowed to be developed unhampered by political controversy, only Hindi authors were asked to confine their vocabulary within the limited knowledge of the uneducated people of the Hindi speaking area. This impossible condition could not be fulfilled, and Hindi became more and more Sanskritized.

With the estrangement of the Muslim League from the Congress, the language issue took an ugly communal turn, and with the introduction of Provincial autonomy in 1937 provincialism also began to creep in steadily into Indian politics. Lengthy and acrimonious debates took place (in English) but no solution satisfactory to all was evolved. In this unsatisfactory condition India attained Independence in 1947.

Gandhiji had however made up his mind that after 15th August, 1947, it was improper for him to speak in English.[23]

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23. "He (Gandhiji) was punctual to the minute and started addressing those assembled in Hindi. A request was made by some of the (Provincial) Ministers that as they could not follow Hindi, he might choose to speak in English. Gandhiji firmly declined observing in his inimitable manner that after August 1947, it was improper to ask him to speak in English; but if there was any time left at the end, he would oblige the non-Hindi area members with a precis of his views in English.... For lack of time there was no English summary of Gandhiji's argument." D. S. Bakhle in *The Civil Servant in India*, edited by K. L. Punjabi, pp. 241-42. The occasion referred to by Mr. Bakhle was an extremely important conference on food situation in India, and the participants included Provincial Food Ministers, and took place on 25. October 18, 1947.

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On September 21, 1947, that is soon after the attainment of Independence, he wrote in the *Harijan:*

"Surely, it must be quite easy for the Provincial Governments to have a staff which would carry on all transactions in the provincial languages and the inter-provincial language, which, in my opinion, can only be Hindustani written in Nagari or Urdu script.

"Every day lost in making this necessary change is so much cultural loss to the nation. The first and foremost thing is to revive the rich provincial languages with which India is blessed.[24] It is nothing short of mental sluggishness to plead that in our courts, in our schools and even in the Secretariats, some time, probably a few years, must lapse before the change is made. No doubt a little difficulty will be felt in multi-lingual provinces, as in Bombay and Madras, until redistribution of provinces takes place on the linguistic basis. Provincial Governments can devise a method in order to enable the people in those provinces to feel that they have come into their own.

"Nor need the provinces wait for the Union for solving the question....If the first step, that is, revival of provincial speech in all public departments takes place immediately, that of inter-provincial speech will follow in quick succession. The provinces will have to deal with the Centre. They dare not do so through English if the Centre is wise enough quickly to realise that they

24. Gandhiji, and following him many politicians, spoke of 'revival of provincial languages', implying that the rich heritage was lost due to British influence. The fact is few of modern Indian languages existed before the British came, and Bengali, Hindi and Marathi prose were created in the Fort William College under British patronage. Lord Wellesley in urging the British officers to learn the Indian languages, practically used the same arguments as Gandhiji did. Speaking of Lord Wellesley, I like to mention that Bengali owes a debt of deep gratitude to him.

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must not tax the nation culturally for the sake of a handful of Indians who are too lazy to pick up the speech which can be easily common to the whole of India without offending any party or section. My plea is for banishing English as a cultural usurper as we successfully banished the political rule of the English usurper. The rich English language will ever retain its natural place as the international speech of commerce and diplomacy.''[25]

Before criticizing Gandhiji, it is well to remember his conception of state and government. Gandhiji envisaged that the village panchayats would be the units of administration, working with little interference from the State or Central Governments. The danger of polarization of loyalty with the growth of parochial sentiments does not seem to have crossed his mind. Neither does he seem to have bestowed any thought on the problem of University or technical education nor on such matters as the language of the courts of law.

But those who were responsible for the drafting of the Constitution had to take into account several problems including the language of the law courts so that the Supreme Court might not be transformed into a tower of Babel.

25. Quoted in the *Report of the Official Language Commission*, 1956, p. 35-36.

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Chapter III

LANGUAGE AND THE CONSTITUTION

I

The Drafting Committee appointed by the Constituent Assembly consisted of B. R. Ambedkar (Chairman), N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, K. M. Munshi, Saiyid Mohammed Saadulla, N. Madhava Rao and D. P. Khaitan.[1] They presented their report,—the draft Constitution of India—on February 21, 1948. This Draft Constitution (Section 99) provided that "in Parliament business shall be transacted in Hindi or English" and any member unable to express himself adequately in either of the two languages, could with the permission of the Speaker, "address the House in his mother tongue;" summary of such speeches in Hindi or English were to be made for purposes of record and distribution. Similar provisions were made for the State legislatures (Section 184).

The Draft Constitution did not make any provision for introducing Hindi and the provincial languages as the Central and State languages, so that it may be presumed that the intention was that English should continue for an indefinite period. The reason for this decision is obvious: up to July 3, 1947 it was not quite clear as to whether the Muslim League would join the Constituent Assembly or not. In case they did, there would have been great difficulty in replacing English. It was also known that the Congress would be willing to accommodate the Muslim League by making provisions for Hindustani in Urdu script.

1. Sir B. L. Mitter, though originally appointed a member of this Committee, was unable to attend after the first meeting, as he ceased to be a member of the Constituent Assembly.

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However, the Muslim League did not join the Constituent Assembly, and the country was partitioned. Thereafter it was felt that as the intransigent section of the Muslims had moved into Pakistan, there was now no need to compromise on the language issue, and arrangements were made to provide for making Hindi the 'official language' of the Union.

In the meantime the Hindi lobby in the Constituent Assembly got busy and collected a large number of signatures from members of the Constituent Assembly to the following declaration: "We support the view that the Union Constitution should lay down that the national language and character (sic) shall be Hindi and Devanagari respectively that in the Federal Parliament business shall be transacted in Hindi written in Devanagari character or, for such period as the Federal Parliament decides, in English."[2] It appears, however, that many of the signatories did not take the declaration seriously.[3]

The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan also called a National Language Convention at Delhi which was attended by many eminent persons from all over India. The Convention decided in favour of Hindi.[4]

2. Speech of Seth Govind Das, September 12, 1949, *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, p. 1325. This is the English translation of the Hindi version.
3. Ibid, pp. 1325-26.
4. Seth Govind Das, op. cit. p. 1327. In this connection Seth Govind Das said: "From Maharashtra, Mahamahopadhyaya Shri Kane was to come to it (National Language Commission) but being unable to undertake the journey he kindly sent a message for the convention." As Seth Govind Das did not mention Mahamahopadhyaya Kane's opinion I wrote to the Mahamahopadhyaya who replied as follows on 11-4-65: "I do not remember anything about what happened in 1949 as even then I was in my 70th year. I remember this much that on one occasion I publicly stated in some meeting that if only one language was to be official language (apart from English) it was Bengali written in Devnagari script should be that

(*Continued on next page*)

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Far more important than these pacts and resolutions, was a resolution of the Congress Working Committee according to which Hindi was to replace English within a period of fifteen years. But then the trouble arose as to which language should replace English—Hindi or Hindustani?

These discussions were held in camera and there appears to be little chance of finding the details. However Maulana A. K. Azad during his speech in the Constituent Assembly gave the following summary account of the proceedings of the Party meeting:

"As you are aware, in the party meeting this question was thrashed out for several days, but they could not arrive at any conclusion. The question of fixing a time-limit for the retention of English and enforcement of the new change was the focus of the greater part of these discussions. Several fresh resolutions relating to language were also introduced. One resolution was to retain the word 'Hindi' in the Constitution with this interpretation that Hindi includes that style of language also which is commonly known as Urdu. The object was to create that expansive spirit in 'Hindi' which is associated with the name of 'Hindustani'. At last, the question was left to the Drafting Committee with the request to prepare a fresh draft of this part for the consideration of the party in the light of all those resolutions which were moved during the discussions in the party meeting. Several new members were also added to the Drafting Committee. I was also one of the members.

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language, as Hindi had not much literature in modern times and for other reasons."

This suggestion is interesting in view of the fact that the language of a small minority has been adopted in Indonesia. See above p. 3.

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"I attended the first meeting of the Committee, but I felt that the majority of members had a particular type of pre-conceived notion and they could not agree to adopt 'Hindustani' in place of 'Hindi', nor were they prepared to accept any such interpretation which can widen the scope of 'Hindi'. In the circumstances I could not associate myself with this Committee. Therefore I resigned and severed my connection with the Committee.

"After my resignation this question was raised in the Committee afresh and an effort was made to introduce breadth of vision in solving the problem to a certain extent. The amendment of Mr. Ayyangar which he had moved in the party meeting was a product of this effort. It is the same amendment which is now before you for your consideration."[5]

As Maulana Azad stated, the Congress Party meetings were really concerned with the period for which English was to be retained. There were members from U.P. and C.P., who demanded immediate introduction of Hindi in the place of English. There were others, mainly from South India, who wanted to continue the use of English for an indefinite period. And then there was the question of selection of the language, Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani. The case of Hindustani was very strong for Gandhiji had supported it to the extent of resigning from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on this very issue. But the Hindi lobby was very strong and its leader Purushottamdas Tandon was a great force in U.P. Pandit Nehru's position was somewhat equivocal. In 1931, he had written:

"I am sorry for not being able to come to Madura on this occasion. I wish I could come there and render

5. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, p. 1456.

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some service which I possibly can, to my Tamil Nad friends. Particularly I wish I could take part in the deliberations of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Hindi has now completely assumed the role of national language and most of the work of the Congress is being done in Hindi. It is gratifying to learn that Hindi is increasingly spreading in Tamil Nad. I would have come and gladly offered my co-operation in this pious task, but I am sorry that on account of compelling reasons I am unable to come there. I hope the session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan will be a success and will pave the way for the spread of Hindi in Tamil Nad."[6]

The situation in U.P. was so pro-Hindi that it was not politically possible to ignore it and for various other reasons Panditji did not get involved in the controversy. Neither did Sardar Patel. Therefore, the task for evolving a formula fell on Dr. K. M. Munshi and Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar, and the resolution on the language came to be known as the Munshi-Ayyangar formula.[7] But as Dr. Munshi has stated, the formula was evolved "with the co-operation and support of Sarvashri Pattabhi Sitaramaya of Andhra, Kripalani of Sindh, Shyamaprasad Mukherjee of Bengal, Bakshi Tekchand of Punjab, Kakasaheb Gadgil of Maharashtra, Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer of Madras, and most other leaders of different

6. Ibid, p. 1329. In 1937 or 1938 the late Mr. Syed Husain was our guest at Dacca. He was an old friend of Pandit Nehru and bitterly reproached him (Pandit Nehru) for his pro-Hindi attitude. Mr. Syed Husain also took exception to Panditji's wearing *dhoti* instead of *pyjama*. However, Panditji changed his sartorial habits completely, and I have never heard him speaking in Hindi.
7. It was actually referred to as the 'Munshi-Ayyangar formula' by B. N. Gupte, *Constituent Assembly Debates*, Vol. IX. p. 1406. Technically speaking Munshi-Ayyangar formula was Amendment No. 65 of the Articles 99 and 184 of the Draft Constitution.

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provinces under the guidance of Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru."[7a] It was presented to the Constituent Assembly by N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar on September 12, 1949. The debate on this formula began on the 12th and continued till the evening of the 14th September 1949, and covers 177 pages of the proceedings.[8] More than three hundred amendments were tabled, but as many of these amendments were similar in nature, many were not actually moved, and many were ultimately withdrawn; the rest, a few in number were lost.

II

While opening the debate on September 12, 1949, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly said:

"We have now to take up the articles dealing with the question of language. I know this is a subject which has been agitating the minds of Members for some time and so I would make an appeal to the speakers who are going to take part in the debate. My appeal is not in favour of any particular proposition, but it is with regard to the nature of the speeches which Members may be making. Let us not forget that whatever decision is taken with regard to the question of language, it will have to be carried out by the country as a whole. There is no other item in the whole Constitution of the country which will be required to be implemented from day to day, from hour to hour, I might even say from minute to minute in actual practice. Therefore, Members will remember that it will not do to carry a point by debate in this House. The decision of the House should be ac-

7a. *The Language Issue* Address by Dr. K. M. Munshi at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad, March 16, 1945, pp. 13-14.
8. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, pp. 1312-1489.

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ceptable to the country as a whole. Even if we succeed in getting a particular proposition passed by majority, if it does not meet with the approval of any considerable section of people in the country—either in the north or in the south, the implementation of the Constitution will become a most difficult problem. Therefore, when any Member rises to speak on this language question I would request him most earnestly to remember that he should not let fall a single word or expression which might hurt or cause offence. Whatever has to be said, should be said in moderate language so that it might appeal to reason and there should be no appeal to feelings or passion in a matter like this."

Then after some procedural discussion, during which it was evident that the Munshi-Ayyangar formula would not be accepted unanimously, Gopalaswami Ayyangar moved his amendment which was as follows:

CHAPTER I—LANGUAGE OF THE UNION

Official language of the Union.

301A.(1) The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script and form of numbers to be used for the official purposes of the Union shall be the international form of Indian numerals.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in clause (1) of this article, for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of this Constitution, the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union, for which it was being used at such commencement:

Provided that the President may, during the said period, by order authorise for any of the official purposes of the Union the use of the Hindi language in addition to the English language and of the Devanagari form of

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numerals in addition to the international form of Indian numerals.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in this article, Parliament may by law provide for the use of the English language after the said period of fifteen years for such purposes as may be specified in such law.

Commission and Committee of Parliament on official language.

301B. (1) The President shall, at the expiration of the five years from the commencement of this Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of ten years from such commencement, by order constitute a commission which shall consist of a Chairman and such other members representing the different languages specified in Schedule VII-A as the President may appoint, and the order shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Commission to make recommendation to the President as to—

(a) the progressive use of the Hindi language for the official purposes of the Union;

(b) restrictions on the use of the English language for all or any of the official purposes of the Union;

(c) the language to be used for all or any of the purposes mentioned in article 301-E of this Constitution.

(d) form of numerals to be used for any one or more specified purposes of the Union;

(e) any other matter referred to the Commission by the President as regards the official language of the Union and the language of the Inter-State communication and their use.

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(3) In making their recommendations under clause (2) of this article, the Commission shall have due regard to the industrial, cultural and scientific advancement of India, and the just claims and the interest of the non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the public services.

(4) There shall be constituted a Committee consisting of thirty members of whom twenty shall be members of the House of the People and ten shall be members of the Council of States chosen respectively by the members of the House of the People and the members of the Council of States in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

(5) It shall be the duty of the Committee to examine the recommendations of the Commission constituted under this article and to report to the President their opinion thereon.

(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in article 301A of this Constitution, the President may after consideration of the report referred to in clause (5) of this article issue directions in accordance with the whole or any part of the report.

CHAPTER II—REGIONAL LANGUAGES

Official language or languages of a State.

301C. Subject to the provisions of article 301D and 301E a State may by law adopt any of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State:

Provided that until the Legislature of the State otherwise provides by law, the English language shall continue to be used for those official purposes within the

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State for which it was being used at the commencement of this constitution.

Official language for communication between one State and another or between a State and the Union

301D. The language for the time being authorised for use in the Union for official purposes shall be the official language for communication between one State and another State and between a State and the Union:

Provided that if two or more States agree that the Hindi language should be the official language for communication between such States that language may be used for such communication.

Special provision relating to language spoken by a section of the population of a State.

301E. Where on a demand being made in that behalf, the President is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desires the use of any language spoken by them to be recognized by that State he may direct that such language shall also be officially recognized throughout that State or any part thereof for such purpose as he may specify.

CHAPTER III—LANGUAGE OF SUPREME COURT AND HIGH COURTS, ETC.

Language to be used in the Supreme Court and in the High Courts and for Acts, Bills, etc.

301F. Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing provisions of this Part, until Parliament by law otherwise provides—

(a) all proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High Court.

(b) the authoritative texts—

(i) of all Bills to be introduced or amendments thereto to be moved in either House of Par-

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liament or in the House or either House of the Legislature of a State,

(ii) of all Acts passed by Parliament or the Legislature of a State and of all Ordinances promulgated by the President or a Governor or a Ruler as the case may be,

(iii) of all orders, rules, regulations and bye-laws issued under this Constitution or under any law made by Parliament or the Legislature of a State shall be in the English language.

Special procedure for enactment of certain laws relating to language.

301G. During the period of fifteen years from the commencement of this Constitution no Bill or amendment making provision for the language to be used for any of the purposes mentioned in article 301F of this Constitution shall be introduced or moved in either House of Parliament without the previous sanction of the President, and the President shall not give his sanction to the introduction of any such Bill or the moving of any such amendment except after he has taken into consideration the recommendations of the Commission constituted under article 301B of the Constitution and the report of the Committee referred to in that article.

CHAPTER IV—SPECIAL DIRECTIVES

Language to be used for representation for redress of grievances.

301H. Every person shall be entitled to submit a representation for the redress of any grievance to any officer or authority of the Union or a State in any of the languages used in the Union or in the State, as the case may be.

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Directive for Development of Hindi.

301I. It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of Hindi and to develop the language so as to serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India and drawing, wherever desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages.

SCHEDULE VIIA

1. Assamese
2. Bengali
3. Canarese
4. Gujarati
5. Hindi
6. Kashmiri
7. Malayalam
8. Marathi
9. Oriya
10. Punjabi
11. Tamil
12. Telugu
13. Urdu.[9]

The importance of the language debate in the Constituent Assembly was that for the first time the problem was discussed from various points of view, and brought to surface the latent suspicions and fears as well as many suggestions to overcome them. It is not possible to give here a resume of the proceedings, but we have to note some of the important aspects of the debate.

First was the attitude of members from South India. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar (Madras: General) said: "It probably means life and death for the South, unless it is going to be handled in the way in which it ought to be

9. ibid, p. 1321-23. For the text of Gopalaswamy Ayyangar's speech see appendix.

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done...Hindi is no more national to us than English or any other language.....I may say that the South is feeling frustrated....If you are going to impose it on other people, whether it is a real imposition or not, whether as a matter of fact, as somebody said, it is the natural course to which we have come and we could not avoid it, even if it is so, if there is this feeling that there is this imposition, of the North over the South, it will lead to very bitter results'....[10]

Dr. P. Subbarayan, who wanted Hindi in Roman script was compelled to state:

"I feel, Sir, that it is very important that you should understand the South Indian position. If I tell you what exactly happened for three months when I was holding charge of the portfolio of education in Madras and Hindi was introduced as a compulsory subject in the first three forms of the High Schools, you will understand my anxiety that I should go back from here with something done, something accomplished. For three whole months, every morning when I got out of my house I heard nothing but cries of 'Let Hindi die and let Tamil live. Let Subbarayan die and Rajagopalachari die'. That was the cry that went up for three months and what is more, we were constrained to use even the Criminal Law Amendment Act which we riled against previously."[11]

The reason for these apprehensions and forebodings was the attitude taken by the protagonists of Hindi. In South India, the English numerals are used, and at Gopalaswami Ayyangar's insistence the English numerals were made official in the Munshi-Ayyangar formula and

10. ibid, pp. 1371-73. Chettiar's amendment was: "The President shall, after the expiry of 15 years from the commencement of this Constitution, lay down the method by which the substitution of English by Hindi should be carried out."
11. ibid, p. 1401.

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were called international numerals. These numerals have certain advantages, and as Dr. Rajendra Prasad pointed out later, that except 3 or 4 figures the rest are common in Hindi and English numerals.[12] But passion rose high on the question of numerals and the protagonists of Hindi insisted that the Devanagari numerals should be adopted. Everyone else pointed out that this demand was unreasonable and was creating an anti-Hindi feeling to which Sri Biswanath Das (Orissa: General) gave expression:

"Sir, this question of Hindi as the lingua franca has caused us a lot of misgivings. I will not be true to myself, my conscience and my God if I do not express my feelings. I will not be true to my great leader, Mahatma Gandhi, who is in Heaven, if I do not express truly and correctly the apprehensions that I have come to entertain during the last three weeks, and which have been aggravated more and more by the dominating attitude of my friends from U.P. and C.P.

"As we want a lingua franca I do accept Hindi as the official language, but that does not mean that we have no apprehension, we have no suspicions or that we have no fears. My friend Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji this morning indicated some of the fears and suspicions that non-Hindi speaking provinces including those in the South do harbour. This morning when Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra was speaking I was almost persuaded to accept Sanskrit as the official language of the State, so that everybody will start with an even keel in that mother of all languages. There will then be no rivalry between the sons and daughters of the leaders of U.P. and C.P. that are present here and

12. Ibid. pp. 1490-91.

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the sons and daughters of leaders of Orissa or Madras. They will all learn Sanskrit.

"The fears and suspicions that we harbour today were harboured by us till a couple of years ago, when the officialdom was manned by the Britishers and the civil service examinations were conducted in London. Naturally the Englishmen preponderated in service. Now that the civil services and other examinations are being held in Delhi, naturally hereafter the Hindi-speaking provinces (I am not talking of the immediate future but of fifteen years hence) the people of the Hindi-speaking provinces such as U.P. and C.P. will preponderate in the civil and other services of our country....

"Sir, I have said already that we are human beings and the problems of loaves and fishes affect us as much as the problems of higher national ideology. Let the leaders of U.P. that will speak hereafter tell us how they are solving that problem so that they do not get an overriding weightage on the other Provinces like Orissa, Assam, Bengal, or the Southern Provinces and States like Madras, part of Bombay, Mysore and Travancore. That is a problem they will have to solve.''[13]

Similar expressions were used by Srimati G. Durgabai (Madras: General).

"Sir, the National language of India should not be and cannot be any other than Hindustani which is Hindi plus Urdu. For the sake of satisfying the sentiments of our friends we have accepted Hindi in Devanagari script. It is no less sacrifice for us to have had to depart from a principle, which we have all along fought for and lived for. This departure means a very serious inconvenience to us and it is not without a pang that we have agreed to this departure from the tolerant Gandhian ideology,

13. ibid. pp. 1396-97.

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the Gandhian philosophy and the Gandhian proposition, namely, that the official language of India should be only that which is commonly understood and easily spoken and learnt. Sir, this is the sacrifice that we have made.

"Perhaps Tandonji, Seth Govind Dasji and others do not know this and are not aware of the powerful opposition in the South against the Hindi language. The opponents feel perhaps justly that this propaganda for Hindi cuts at the very root of the provincial languages and is a serious obstacle to the growth of the provincial languages and provincial culture. Sir, the anti-Hindi agitation in the south is very powerful. My friend Dr. Subbarayan dealt at some length on this point yesterday. But, Sir, what did we do, we the supporters of Hindi? We braved that fierce agitation and propagated Hindi in the South. Long before the Pandits of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan realised the importance of having a national language for India, we all in the South obeyed the call of Mahatma Gandhi and carried on Hindi propaganda in the South. We started schools and conducted classes in Hindi. Thus with great inconvenience we dedicated ourselves very long ago to the propagation and learning of Hindi....Now what is the result of it all? I am shocked to see this agitation against that enthusiasm of ours with which we took to Hindi in the early years of this century. Sir, this attitude on your part to give a national character to what is purely a provincial language is responsible for embittering the feelings of the non-Hindi speaking people. I am afraid this would certainly adversely affect the sentiments and the feelings of those who have already accepted Hindi with Devanagari script. In short, Sir, this overdone and misused propaganda on their part is responsible and would be responsible for

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losing the support of people who know and who are supporters of Hindi like me....

"Now, Sir, when we have made this sacrifice, you come out and say, sacrifice another point and swallow the other five per cent, remaining out of the hundred per cent, and adopt the Hindi numerals. I should say that is the height—I hesitate to put it that way but I must say it—of language tyranny and intolerance."[14]

A graceful acceptance of the South Indian demand for international numerals would have won over most of the opponents, but in spite of all friendly admonitions and warnings the Hindi protagonists, led by Seth Govind Das and Sri Purushottam Das Tandon remained unmoved. Their attitude was all the more inexplicable because they had no chance of gaining their point, for not only were the South Indian members against them, but Pandit Nehru unambiguously supported the use of international numerals. Sardar Patel did not take any part in the debate, but his support to the formula of which his trusted lieutenant Munshi was a party, was a foregone conclusion. The only result of Govind Das's and Tandonji's irreconcilable attitude was that they lost the sympathy of many of their friends and helped to create mounting aversion towards what came to be known as Hindi-imperialism and 'H-independence'. The protagonists of Hindi forgot that the language came to assume national importance due to the importance given it by non-Hindi speaking leaders like Swami Dayanand, Mahatma Gandhi and their followers. Left to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Hindi would never have gained national status.

Many followers of Gandhiji demanded Hindustani to be the official language, and they had the support of

14. ibid, pp. 1426-27.

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the U.P. Muslims and Maulana Azad. Some members demanded Hindi in Roman script while a few counselled postponement of the issue.

The Constituent Assembly adjourned for lunch at 1 p.m. on September 14, 1949 and as soon as it met at 5 p.m. closure was moved. Almost immediately Dr. Munshi requested the President to adjourn the House for half an hour to enable him to conclude negotiations with the members and to slightly amend the Munshi-Ayyangar formula to ensure its acceptance. For, at this time it appeared that the combined opposition of some members from South India, members who demanded Hindi numerals, and some who wanted Hindi to replace English in five years, and the Gandhi-ites and the Muslims who wanted Hindustani might combine and throw out the Munshi-Ayyangar formula. That would have created a dangerous political situation.

Therefore the half an hour's parley which enabled Dr. Munshi to extricate his formula with the addition of two more clauses, was of crucial importance.

When the Constituent Assembly re-assembled at 6 p.m. Dr. Munshi moved that the debate be re-opened to enable him to submit certain amendments. With the permission of the House the debate was reopened and Dr. Munshi moved the following amendments:[15]

"That for clause (1) of article 301A, the following be substituted:—

'(1) The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.

The form of numerals to be used for the official purposes of the Union shall be the international form of Indian numerals."

15. ibid, pp. 1466-67.

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Shri Mahavir Tyagi: What is the meaning of (1) when there is no. (2)?

Shri K. M. Munshi: One sentence has been split into two, and the word 'and' has been omitted. It is a purely verbal one.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: Mr. Tyagi's point is, there is only one sub-clause and why should it be 1(1).

Shri K. M. Munshi: There is a sub-paragraph 1(1) because there are other sub-paras (2) and (3) in the original article. Not this (2) but there are other (2) and (3).

Mr. President: I should like to see all the amendments.

Shri K. M. Munshi: I move the second amendment, Sir,

"That for clause (3) of article 301A, the following be substituted:—

'(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in this article, Parliament may after the said period of fifteen years by law provide for the use of—

(a) the English language, or.....' "

Some Honourable Members: It should be 'and'.

Shri K. M. Munshi: The word 'or' is proper; it means 'and'. However the Drafting Committee will consider it carefully. We did as well as we could within the forty five minutes. We feel 'or' is correct. If we find that 'or' is incorrect, we shall change it.[16]

Shri H. V. Kamath (C.P. and Berar: General): May I suggest, Sir.....

Mr. President: He is on his legs. Why not let him finish?

16. In the Indian Constitution Section 343(3) 'or' has been retained.

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Shri K. M. Munshi:

"(b) the Devanagari form of numerals, for such purposes as may be specified in such law.

My next amendment is—

"That Article 301F be renumbered as clause (1) of article 301F, and to the said clause as so renumbered the following clause be added:—

"(2) Nothing in sub-clause (a) of clause (1) of this article shall prevent a State from prescribing, with the consent of the President, the use of the Hindi language or any other language recognised for official purposes in the State for proceedings in the High Court of the State other than judgments, decrees and orders."

In continuation of this there is another clause.

"(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-clause (b) of clause (1) of this article,

when the Legislature of a State has prescribed the use of any language other than English for Bills, Acts, Ordinances and Orders having the force of law and rules referred to in the said sub-clause, a translation of the same in English certified by the Governor of the State shall be published and the same shall be deemed to be the authoritative text in English under this article."

Honourable Members: What about 'Or rulers'?

Shri K. M. Munshi: There are many articles in which this omission will be found and it will be corrected. If you like I will put it here as 'Governor or Ruler of the State'. This corresponds to amendments tabled by the Honourable Mr. G. S. Gupta, Nos. 164 to 167.

Then the next one is—

"In the schedule substitute 'Kannada' for 'Kanarese' and after 'Punjabi' add 'Sanskrit'.

Apparently during the short time at his disposal, Dr. Munshi had managed to bring round the moderate

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elements amongst the dissidents, and Gopalaswami Ayyangar while replying to the debate stated: "Sir, we are in a happy mood just at this moment and I do not want to mar this happy mood by anything like a long speech from me.[17]" The die-hards however were not satisfied, and after Dr. Munshi had moved his amendment Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena declared: "Sir, this question of the national language has been the subject of hot controversy for the last two days, and these amendments have been suggested by Dr. Munshi as a sort of compromise, and it supposes that the members of the House are agreed upon these amendments. Sir, with profound regret I have come here to lodge my protest and say that I do not agree with them and I do not accept these so called compromise amendments....These amendments which are now moved are supposed to be a compromise but they are not an improvement at all and they do not in any (way) meet the point of view urged by Tandonji and myself. In fact, the fundamental point on which the supporters of Hindi have been insisting has been that the English numerals shall not be a permanent feature of our language. But the amendment now proposed will make these so-called international numerals which are really only plain and simple English numerals, a permanent feature of our language by this Constitution, and that is a position which I cannot accept. All that is conceded in the compromise is this, that after fifteen years Parliament may prescribe Hindi numerals for such purposes as may be specified by law. That means the Devanagari numerals can be used for some purposes, but the main numerals shall be English numerals, and by accepting this amendment, we shall be committing this House and the future generation of our

17. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, p. 1475.

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country to accepting the English numerals as a permanent feature of our language by this Constitution Act and I shall not accept that under any circumstances....I regard this draft of Sri Gopalaswami as a fraud on the supporters of Hindi and a fraud on the Constitution itself. Really this draft perpetuates English for many many years to come as Sri Gopalaswami himself confessed. The Father of the Nation had warned the Nation of this danger which he had scented as early as September 21, 1947 when he wrote his editorial in the *Harijan* of that date."[18]

Gandhiji had indeed advocated the abolition of English, but he had recommended Hindustani and not Hindi.[19] The question of numerals had not been taken up during Gandhiji's life, but there is little doubt that had it been discussed, he would have unhesitatingly advised the use of English numerals as a gesture of good will to the South, in the same spirit in which he accepted Hindustani to please the Muslims. In a sense it was possibly lucky for the protagonists of Hindi that Gandhiji was dead; there can hardly be any doubt that had he been alive he would have forced the Constituent Assembly to accept Hindustani as the official language.

Prof. Saksena and Tandonji moved their amendments for the restoration of Devanagari numerals and for limiting to five years the period of transition from English to Hindi. Other amendments, for the recognition of Urdu script, postponement of decision, substitution of Bengali for Hindi were also moved. But all the amendments were lost and ultimately when the Munshi-Ayyangar

18. ibid, p. 1469.
19. For Gandhiji's article in the *Harijan* of September 21, 1947, see above p. 32.

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formula was put to vote no one opposed it except Maulana Hasrat Mohani who wanted his adverse vote to be recorded with his remarks which was not allowed because there was no procedure for recording the vote of any particular individual with his remarks.[20]

Thus for the time the language controversy ended. In the fury of the debate on Devanagari numerals and the relief that swept the members when the compromise formula was adopted, few members realized that they were really dividing India into linguistic provinces. But the adoption of provincial language as official language of the States had such overwhelming support that those clauses were hardly mentioned during the debate. The sentiment of the members was expressed by Shankarrao Deo who said: "If you mean by national language one language for the whole country, then I am against it. I must make it quite clear. India is a nation and I am an Indian but my language is Marathi."[21]

20. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, p. 1489. The story of the language formula of the Constitution being adopted by the casting vote of the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad is without any foundation.
21. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, p. 1431.

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Chapter IV

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE COMMISSION

In pursuance of the provisions of Article 344 of our Constitution, the Government of India appointed a Commission, called the Official Language Commission on June 7, 1955, which submitted its report on July 31, 1956. The report covers 495 printed pages including 75 pages of appendices and it is not possible to attempt even a summary here. Three notes of dissent were submitted by Dr. S. K. Chatterji (Bengal), Dr. P. Subbarayan (Madras) and Maganbhai P. Desai (Gujarat). The notes of Dr. Chatterji and Dr. Subbarayan may be called pro-English while that of Mr. Desai anti-English. The late Sri B. G. Kher, the Chairman of the Commission, tried to answer the objections raised by the dissenters, particularly Dr. Chatterji and Dr. Subbarayan, but Sri Kher's arguments were not convincing, and as subsequent events have shown, Dr. Chatterji's and Dr. Subbarayan's apprehensions have come true.

For example Dr. Chatterji stated in his note of dissent:

"I cannot help feeling that the Report is simply trying to suggest certain programmes and lines of procedure from the Centre, without a close consideration either of the general situation in India in the sphere of language or of future reactions and repercussions among large sections of our people. It is also seeking to place as something conclusive before the non-Hindi people of India that it will be both an act of patriotic duty and an urgent and necessary reform to replace English by Hindi as quickly as possible and to take in Hindi to saturation in their judicial and administrative bases. I

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educational set up, and consequently even in their most intimate being.

"The provisions in the Constitution regarding the use of Hindi as the Official Language of the Union in certain contexts have been extended in the Report in a manner which will bring about a total revolution in our Education, in the Administration of Law and Justice, in the Central Legislature, and in the Public Services, a revolution which many do not think to be desirable in the best interests of India in her present situation. If the recommendations are sought to be implemented from the Centre, it will bring about immediate chaos in our public life as a whole. It will mean for non-Hindi people the starting of a progressive imposition of Hindi in most spheres of life. The Report has been prepared on the assumption (on the basis of the present Constitution, of course) that Hindi has been already voluntarily accepted by the whole of India, that non-Hindi peoples are as much eager for its use in most spheres of our All-India affairs as speakers of Hindi, and that it will be something anti-national not to try to replace English in the entire administrative, legal and political frame of India, and largely in the educational cadre also. The entire outlook is that of the Hindi-speakers in the Indian Union, who alone are to profit immediately, and for a long time to come, if not for ever. I fear that in the entire report there is very little evidence of an attempt to understand the feellings and the intellectual approach of the non-Hindi speaking peoples for their own languages, and also for English (as it is sincerely regarded by them to be the most necessary thing for the development of science and letters in India, for the preservation of the Unity of India, and for the maintenance of the pre-eminence of India in the modern world). The attitude is far from demo-

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cratic—it is just a case of imposition of one kind of mentality over the rest, as the only natural and at the same time politically sound mentality for the whole of India. The fact that India is a polyglot country where people have now become or are becoming aggressively proud of their own languages is ignored. A particular language has been sought to be given priority over everything else in our national life. As it strikes us, uniformity through Hindi is sought to be brought about as quickly as possible, even at the risk of jeopardising the unity of India through the English language.

"The recommendations will, in my opinion, bring about the immediate creation, without intending to do so, of Two Classes of Citizens in India—Class I Citizens with Hindi as their language, obtaining an immense amount of special privileges by virtue of their language only, and Class II Citizens who will be suffering from permanent disabilities by reason also of their language. This is bound to be the situation so long as non-Hindi speakers like the Assam, Bengal, Orissa, Andhra, Madras, Maharashtra and other peoples do not acquire a command over Hindi which can compare favourably with that of those persons who have Hindi as their only language of education, either along with or to the exclusion of English. As the Government of Kashmir has said in its Reply to the Commission's Questionnaire: 'The residents of non-Hindi speaking areas will be at a considerable, even more or less a permanent disadvantage compared to persons from Hindi areas if English is replaced by Hindi as the medium of the Union Public Service Commission Examinations'. Elsewhere it says: 'It is difficult to foresee how fast non-Hindi speaking peoples can take to Hindi so as to possess equal competitive ability'. With English as a neutral language affecting all equally,

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and as the liaison language not only between India and the World but also among the various linguistic areas and States within India, it was a question of no special favour for any language at the expense of the rest. Now the Indian public as a whole (from the South, North, West and East) must pay for the development of Hindi, which as yet has no intellectual significance or value for the rest of India. It must pay not only in money but also, as people in non-Hindi areas feel, in a huge waste of time and energy and temper in trying to acquire and master a language not yet distinguished in any way above their own, and a language which is still in the making. Whatever concern or solicitude or goodwill might be outwardly shown for them, the languages of India other than Hindi will ultimately come, as a result of these far-reaching recommendations, to have but a secondary position even in their own areas. That is an eventuality which cannot be gladly accepted by their speakers. They will feel that most of the recommendations, particularly under Education and Public Services Examinations, and the Administration of Justice, consciously or unconsciously will bring about a fastening of the tentacles of Hindi on the public life and culture of the non-Hindi peoples in a manner which will make them helpless for ever.

"The recommendations appear to ignore the consequences which may result from them. The Report evinces a subdued but desperate haste to bring in Hindi for the whole of India: 1965 still remains with the Report a target date, although it ruefully admits that 'it has not been possible for us to furnish a regular time-table by dates and stages as to how Hindi should be introduced into the business of the Union so as to accomplish the general change-over within the period fixed by the Con-

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stitution'. I submit the situation now is hardly ripe for bringing in this revolutionary change-over in Indian affairs, while Hindi is not yet ready on the one hand, and the non-Hindi peoples too are not ready either on their part. As one who has devoted over 40 years of his life to the study and teaching of Indian Linguistics and to the consideration of linguistic problems, I am definitely of the opinion that the linguistic question is not at all so very urgent for India, as many persons, ardent patriots most of them, seem to think. I therefore cannot be a party to the recommendations suggested in the Report; nor can I accept the views and arguments and conclusions set forth in it.

"I do not say anything without knowledge and experience and thought. I have been advocating the use of Hindi as one of the official languages of India (side by side with English) for quite a long period. But I have always insisted upon the retention of English in our higher education, and law and administration, pending the time that Hindi and other Indian languages would be able to take over from English. The use of Hindi I have suggested for 'Decorative purposes', in the first instance, and then, if suitable, for inter-provincial communication; but never to the complete exclusion of the regional languages and English. I wanted people in non-Hindi States voluntarily to learn Hindi, just as I have always advocated Hindi-speaking students learning one other language of Modern India. I have been actively occupied in propagating Hindi among Bengali people on a voluntary basis, and for over a decade I have been President of the West Bengal Branch of the Rashtra-Bhasha Prachar Samiti of Wardha. For this, I was misunderstood by my Bengali-speaking friends, and I came in for a good deal of uninformed criticism, even abuse, for sup-

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porting, as they thought, Hindi as against Bengali. I remain a confirmed advocate of the Roman script for all Indian languages, and I feel certain that in our own interest sooner or later we shall do what I consider to be a most sensible thing viz., adopt a modified Roman alphabet for all our Indian languages. I occasionally write in Hindi—I have four books in Hindi, besides a number of articles. I have intimate friends among writers and scholars of Hindi everywhere. One of my books obtained from the U.P. Government one of its highest prizes—this is my Bharatiya Arya-Bhasha Aur Hindi. For another book (on the Rajasthani Language) I received from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan the Ratnakar Prize as the best book in Hindi on a linguistic subject for the year of its award. I have been made an Honorary Member of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras, and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan gave me the title of Sahitya-Vachaspati for my services to Hindi. In 1948 at an International Conference of Linguistic Scholars in Paris, as a member of the Permanent International Council of Linguists (PICL), I had suggested that as the third language of the world in point of numbers speaking or understanding it, and as the representative language of Modern India, Hindi should be recognised as one of the official languages of the United Nations Organisation (UNO), taking its place beside English, French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese. I have a great love for Hindi, not, of course, to the exclusion of Bengali and English and Sanskrit, but as a great and a growing language, which, when voluntarily accepted, will be a most desirable thing for the whole of India. Thus I welcome the way in which Hindi is being given a prominent place in the facade of our All-India national life, side by side with English, and with the regional languages in our non-Hindi States

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(e.g. in public sign-boards and notices as in the railway and the post office, and in the state documents with a foreign context), as this will help people all over the country to familiarise themselves with Hindi and induce them to be drawn favourably to it as a great symbol and bond of Union for our United States of India."[1]

Dr. Subbarayan supported the contentions of Dr. Chatterji and added:

"I feel that certain fundamental and vital issues have been totally ignored in the report. The provisions in the Constitution regarding the use of Hindi as the official language of the Union in certain contexts have been extended in the Report in a manner which will bring about an abrupt and a total revolution in our education, in the administration of Law and Justice, in the Central Legislature and in the Public Services. In my opinion the recommendations made in the Report go far beyond the terms of reference. If those recommendations are sought to be implemented by the Union Government it will result in the immediate imposition of Hindi on non-Hindi speaking people which will lead to confusion and even chaos in our public life as a whole. The Report has been prepared on the assumption that under the present Constitution Hindi has been already voluntarily accepted by the whole of India, that non-Hindi-speaking peoples are as eager for it as speakers of Hindi, and that it will be something anti-national not to try to replace English by Hindi. It might appear to some people that the report represents the view of the Hindi speakers, who alone benefit immediately, and for a long time to come, if not for ever. I fear that in the entire report there is very little evidence of understanding, imagination and sympathy for the non-Hindi-speaking peoples of India. There

1. *Report of the Official Language Commission* (1956), pp. 275-78.

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is hardly any serious consideration of the fact that great languages more ancient and more developed in every way than Hindi do exist and do flourish vigorously in the country, claiming the passionate homage of their speakers. There is hardly any attempt to understand the feelings and the intellectual appreciation of the non-Hindi-speaking peoples wanting to retain English 'till such time as Hindi is fully developed as a vehicle of expression and that it is sincerely regarded by them to be the most necessary thing for the development of science and letters in India and for the maintenance of the pre-eminence of India in the modern world under present-day conditions.

"It must be admitted that Hindi is not as old and as well-advanced as some other Indian languages, particularly Bengali and Tamil. I can point out with regard to Tamil that as far as the Tamil people are concerned, Hindi to them is as foreign as is Tamil to the Hindi-speaking people. There is even a feeling among some of the Tamil people that English is easier for them to understand and learn than Hindi. It has already been evident that the Tamil people resent the imposition of Hindi on them and resent much more the undue haste with which it is sought to be imposed, and in preference to English which is a world language and which they have already learnt to good advantage in all spheres of knowledge. They naturally feel that there is no reason why they should give up a first class language which they have ready in their hands in preference to an ill-developed second-class instrument. I think that our President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and our Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, are aware of these feelings in Madras State as they have in several of their speeches assured the people there that there would be no imposition of Hindi

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on them against their will. The attitude in the main report is far from democratic—it is just a case of imposition of one point of view over everybody no matter what differences of opinion might exist among the people. The fact that India is a polyglot country where people have now become passionately proud of their own language is ignored. A particular language has been sought to be given priority over others in our national life. As it strikes me, uniformity through Hindi in the matter of language is sought to be brought about as quickly as possible, even at the risk of jeopardising the cause of unity of India.

"Evolution preferable to revolution.

"The recommendations in the Report appear to ignore the consequences which may result from the implementation of them. The Report evinces a desperate haste to bring in Hindi for the whole of India. 1965 still remains a target date in the Report. After having heard the evidence in both Hindi and non-Hindi-speaking States, I am convinced that nine years from now will certainly not be enough for non-Hindi-speaking States to get prepared for this eventuality. This is a very vital question which the Report has ignored. I submit that the situation now is hardly ripe for bringing in this revolution in Indian affairs, while Hindi is not yet ready on the one hand and the non-Hindi-speaking people too are not ready either on their part. I believe in evolution rather than revolution.

"Unity of India.

"The recent events in many parts of India have brought home to me the imperative necessity to keep intact our most precious treasure of Indian unity. It

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is, therefore, important to consider seriously about the extent to which we should push Hindi and the speed with which we should try to make it the official language of India. Many honestly feel that there are already signs of the danger of an incipient 'Hindi Imperialism' which will be all the more anti-national as Hindi has not yet acquired any pre-eminence over the other languages of India except its weight of numbers. The Hindi-speaking people, like all human beings, are not free from linguism and their expectations have been raised very high. It is also my conviction, after careful observation and thinking, that the relegation of English to a secondary place in our education and public life will certainly not be for the good of the country. Hence I venture to differ from the findings and recommendations of the majority of the Commision and present my specific proposals.

"*Basis for my recommendations.*

"My recommendations are made with the view to serve the best interests of the people of India and in making them the approach has been realistic and practical and not idealistic and sentimental. It is necessary to go into the question of the difficulties that are cropping up in the way of the establishment of Hindi now in all spheres in the place of English and one has also to consider the claims of the various regional languages which are now becoming established for administrative, educational and other purposes in the various non-Hindi States. The present linguism or linguistic intolerance which has become, during the last few years, and particularly during the last few months, such an ugly phenomenon and such a disconcerting problem in Indian public life, striking at the very root of Indian unity, should also

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be dispassionately considered. I shall here briefly deal with these points.

"Primary objectives of Official Language.

"With regard to an official language for India, or for any other country where there are numerous literary languages we should have four primary objectives:

(i) Maintenance of National Unity;
(ii) Maintenance of Efficiency of Administration;
(iii) Advancement of knowledge among all sections of the people;
(iv) The availability of equal opportunities for all citizens from all parts of the country.

India is a polyglot nation and the fundamental necessity for India to exist as a nation is the preservation and strengthening of the unity that underlies her diversity in language. A particular language can have a value in India's corporate life as a whole in so far as it tends to promote and strengthen that unity."[2]

Even a cursory examination of the Official Language Commission Report shows that the apprehensions of Dr. Chatterji and Dr. Subbarayan were justified. For example, dealing with the medium of instruction the Report recommends:

"The system that we would recommend, so far as the question of medium of instruction in Universities as between regional language and Hindi is concerned, would be as follows:—

(1) Universities should have the freedom to decide for themselves whether they would adopt the regional language or Hindi as the general medium in their respective Universities.

2. Ibid, pp. 310-11.

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(2) It may be left to the Universities themselves to decide in concert with each other, and after due deliberation in their established organs of consultation like the Inter-University Board, in what faculties, particularly in the professional subjects and Natural Sciences, and at what stages, particularly whether in the post-graduate stage, the teaching should be through a common medium of Hindi alone in all Universities on the displacement of English medium.

(3) All Universities should in any event be required to arrange to examine students offering themselves for any university examinations with Hindi as the medium of instruction.

(4) All affiliating Universities should also be under obligation to offer affiliation on equal terms to any colleges or institutions teaching through Hindi as the medium of instruction for any of their courses in the territorial jurisdiction of the University."[3]

Thus the autonomy of the Universities to select their medium of instruction given in clauses (1) and (2) are restricted by clauses (3) and (4), and every University of the non-Hindi speaking area is obliged to appoint two sets of examiners and then to make special arrangements for moderation of the answer papers.

This, however, was necessary, because the Report contemplated that ultimately Union Public Service Commission would conduct its examinations only in Hindi:

"We would point out, in this connection, that the question of considering the introduction of the regional languages (that is other than Hindi) as linguistic media

3. ibid, p. 94.

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for these examinations would not, in any event, arise proximately. The adoption of a regional language as a medium for studies up to graduation has not yet been achieved to anything like an extent to necessitate the immediate consideration of the possible introduction of such a medium. In our recommendations regarding the place of Hindi in the educational system, we have suggested that Hindi should be available generally at least as an optional examining medium along with the respective regional languages, for the purpose of examinations in all the Universities in the country. By this arrangement, non-Hindi-speaking candidates aspiring to sit for the all-India competitive examinations would have been enabled to equip themselves for the purpose of exercising the option of the Hindi medium in such examinations by availing themselves of these facilities in the Universities. It is sometimes argued that no matter what the provisions regarding teaching Hindi to non-Hindi students are, the candidate with the Hindi mother-tongue will always have an advantage over the candidate who has had to learn it. This may or may not be so and we would not like to express any dogmatic opinion at this stage so far ahead of the material time. We would however like to point out that Indian candidates who for the most part commenced learning English after the primary stage, used to compete quite successfully with British candidates in examinations held in English in London for the I.C.S. despite other handicaps such as the quality and character of instruction in Indian Universities as compared to the British, the inevitable handicap in the viva voce, and so forth. If this was so with reference to English, an entirely foreign language with a literary context quite alien to Indian life, is there any ground for supposing that any serious handicap would

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all the time operate against non-Hindi-speaking candidates? While the mother-tongue certainly gives an advantage in the early stages of education, where instruction relates to common experiences, in the higher stages, where specialised knowledge of a subject is to be acquired, it is open to doubt whether the mother-tongue by itself gives any such decisive advantage. After all, every boy from the Hindi region (many of whom have indeed a different mother-tongue such as Bhojpuri, Maithili, Rajasthani, etc.) has to learn as much as anybody else, the literary usage of the Hindi language during his educational career. Besides, apart from grammar and the vocables, most of the literary context, e.g. the reference to Nature, social behaviour, cultural values, being drawn from Indian life and surroundings are a background shared alike by the non-Hindi with the Hindi boy. Indeed, the difference in this, more than the difference merely in vocabulary which is easily made up, was the real handicap of the Indian candidate who competed with the British candidate for the London I.C.S. in the past. We would, therefore, be inclined to discount that the non-Hindi-speaking candidates at these competitive examinations in the future would for all time have an insurmountable handicap with reference to the Hindi medium, and, even if it is found that there is an element of such handicap, it could perhaps be taken care of by some compensating device like another extra paper for the Hindi-speaking candidates."[4]

Here in its eagerness to stress the claim of Hindi the Commission has totally ignored the issue, namely, whether the candidates whose mother-tongue is Hindi should gain any advantage if the medium of the service

4. ibid. p. 198-99.

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examinations became Hindi. On the contrary it has raised new issues by maintaining that Bhojpuri and Maithili are as different from Hindi as Tamil or Telugu. It is interesting to note that Sri Desai in his note held that under Article 345 of our Constitution Maithili, Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Rajasthani, Bundeli, Konkani, etc. were all eligible to be recognized as official languages of their respective states.[5] That is Balkanization should be thorough.

However, a lawyer may have passed all his examinations in his mother tongue, but the Commission recommends:

"There are very strong and in our opinion, conclusive reasons in favour of deciding that the language of the judgments, decrees and orders of the High Court should be in the Hindi language. For reasons which we gave in paragraph 5 of Chapter IX, the Statute Book of the country, including State enactments, has to be in the Hindi language. The Supreme Court will be functioning in Hindi, and it must be enabled to sit in appeal over judgments as originally delivered and not as translated into Hindi. High Court decisions and judgments delivered by judges of one High Court are habitually referred to and quoted in other High Courts of the country; obviously it is vastly preferable that such judgments are available for preference, in the language in which they were delivered, lest a large number of unnecessary and avoidable issues relating to accuracy of translations be raised in regard to them."[6]

The Language Commission, however, have been very optimistic about the capabilities of the State languages, and this attitude is most noticeable in their solution of

5. ibid. p. 344.
6. ibid. p. 167-68.

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the problem which the displacement of English would create in the field of technical education. The analysis of the problem and the recommendation of the commission are as follows:—

"A word may be interposed here about the translatory effort that would be necessary to support such a change-over in the general medium. We are of course conscious that no amount of translatory effort can hopefully cope (sic) with the enormous volume of literature in the way of periodicals and new publications which is continuously becoming available in the English language in different branches of study. We are informed by the Indian Science Congress Association, which is a representative body of Indian scientists and as such speaks with authority, that in the scientific domain we are importing every month some 600 scientific and technical journals in English and some 12,000 to 13,000 books on the various sciences which are published in the English language in the U.K., the U.S.A. as well as other countries. Since, however, at all relevant levels for reception for this stream of literature we postulate a sufficient knowledge of English for purposes of comprehension by all persons likely to have occasion to make use of this literature, we do not have to apprehend any fall in academic standards owing to a general change in the linguistic medium. The translatory effort will be principally directed to text-books and an appropriate volume of 'supporting literature'. It is finally a question of balancing advantages and disadvantages of different courses of action. Today, we try and teach everybody the English language over the greater part of his educational effort, with the result that everybody is supposed to be in part his own translator; that is to say, he imbibes knowledge through English sources, having

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translated the subject-matter from English for himself into his own thought-process which, if more or less 'anglicised', could not have attained that state at a disproportionate cost of mental energy and capacity.

"When the general medium would have been changed over to an Indian language the translations would be done by a small number of people who would save to that extent the expenditure of intellectual energy to all others with corresponding benefit to their capacity for genuinely comprehending the subject-matter. Besides, once we change over to the medium of our own languages the chances of text-books in the Indian languages being conceived and executed as original compositions rather than as translations would itself greatly improve. There need, therefore, be no fall in academic standards by a general change of the medium; and indeed a line should be opened out by such change for improvement in the general standard of academic attainment in due course as the difficulties of the transition are got over and full benefits of a shift to the natural medium of instruction accrue."[7]

An illustration of our 'translatory capacity' has been recently given by Sri Inder Malhotra in the *Statesman* of April 16, 1965.

"On the morrow of the Chinese invasion of India," writes Sri Malhotra, "it was decided to publish a brochure on the Chinese treachery in all the 14 languages. The work of translation and printing had to be farmed out to dozens of agencies at various places in the country. The result has been that the printing was completed only a week or so ago. When the document will be actually distributed throughout the country is, of course, a different matter."

7. ibid. pp. 44-5.

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In this connection it is tempting to compare the optimistic recommendations of the Commission and the conditions obtaining in the Central Secretariat as reported by Sri Malhotra. The Commission Report states:

"We have stated in paragraph 11 above that during the transitional stage one must expect to have a mixture of the two linguistic media, that is to say English and Hindi, in the business of the Union. It is conceivable that such a state of affairs may have to continue even after 1965 if it should so happen that the Union Government employees, despite having made best efforts in the meantime, have not been able to equip themselves sufficiently to handle their official business in the new Union language namely Hindi by that year. Such cases would obviously have to be similarly considered with sympathy and for a reasonable period of time after 1965 in suitable cases the option of using the English medium in the official business of the Union may have to be extended in favour of such persons. Of course, for reasons similar to those stated in the above sub-paragraph it would be necessary to insist in any case that all such personnel shall have acquired at least the necessary 'comprehending ability' so that they do not obstruct or retard the shift to the new linguistic medium so far as others are concerned.

"So far as stenographers are concerned, a scheme may be adopted whereby they are granted special leave, if this is necessary, to undertake training (which may also be provided) in stenography in the new linguistic medium. We were informed in one State that persons knowing stenography in the English language can fairly quickly learn doing stenography in Hindi, provided of course they have first acquired a sufficient knowledge of the other language. As a practical proposition, ob-

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viously, we must look to the existing stenographers of the Central Government being taught to do stenography in the new medium. One cannot think in terms of either holding up the progress of the linguistic medium until they have retired or of replacing them wholesale. The absence of stenographic facility would certainly work as a very serious handicap in the adoption of the new linguistic medium at the higher officer levels. We would recommend that a scheme for sufficiently long periods of leave being granted to stenographers specially for this purpose with free facilities to learn stenography in the new medium and to acquire knowledge of the Hindi language be seriously considered and put into effect at an early date. The same remarks would apply to the case of typists."[8]

And here is the present situation as reported by Sri Malhotra in the *Statesman* of April 16, 1965:

"In all the din and noise of controversy, however, a fundamental fact is being ignored: even if the entire country was prepared to switch over to Hindi immediately, it would just not be possible to do so. Take the simple matter of those in the Central Secretariat whose job it is to scribble on files and push them around. Those with Hindi as their mother tongue and others above the age of 45 can be left out of consideration. Of the rest, for every official who has acquired a smattering of Hindi over recent years, there are three who have yet to do so.

"Even if all these gentlemen could miraculously become proficient in Hindi overnight, the position would not improve. All the Hindi typewriters that the country can muster would not suffice to equip a single large Ministry.

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8. Ibid., pp. 126-27.

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"And then there is the interesting fact that of the mountain of laws, rules, regulations and standing orders, only a molehill has been translated into some sort of Hindi.

"This poor performance is nothing however compared to the country's overall failure in the field of translating into Hindi and other Indian languages the wealth of human knowledge. Our record is abysmally poor. Moscow, Peking and even the Vatican have better facilities for translation into Indian languages than we can boast of. The Soviet Union and China can flood this country with books and pamphlets published by them in Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam, etc. But in New Delhi there is no arrangement for translating even the briefest document into all the fourteen languages enumerated in the Constitution as Indian's national languages."

However, to continue with the Report of the Official Language Commission which observes in the same context:—

"There is no reason to suppose that the scientific and technical advances made in the West would not have come to bear on Indian life and conditions but for the instrumentality of the English language in their conveyance."[9] This astounding statement is absolutely inaccurate and I quote it here to show the anti-English bias of the Commission.

As such ideas are widely prevalent it is necessary to remind ourselves that modern India owes a debt to English which it is difficult to overestimate. Almost all the modern Indian languages, particularly, the prose writing, was directly influenced by English. Technical

9. ibid, p. 45.

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education is entirely due to English education. It is no use saying that ancient India was very advanced technically, for it will not alter the fact that today we are more backward than any Western country.

Gandhiji's opinion had great influence on the Language Commission. I have already quoted from the Language Commission Report his opinions which have been accepted by the Commission as valid reasons for replacing English. In order to recommend the replacement of English as medium of University education the Commission again tried to receive support from Gandhiji's pronouncements which are as follows:

"As Mahatma Gandhi observed as early as 1916: 'Every Indian youth, because he reaches his knowledge through the English language, lost at least six precious years of life. Multiply that by the number of students turned out by our schools and colleges and find out for yourselves how many thousand years have been lost to the nation. The charge against us is, that we have no initiative. How can we have any if we are to devote the precious years of our life to the mastery of a foreign tongue? We fail in this attempt also.....' (Young India, 1-9-1921). Then again: 'The foreign medium has caused brain fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce

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the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy'. Coming from Mahatma Gandhi this is indeed a very strong indictment of the English medium.

"It is widely recognised that the general medium of instruction in the Universities has to be eventually replaced by the Indian languages. Of course we recognise that for a long time to come in some of the faculties, especially in the field of scientific studies, English will have to continue as the medium of instruction. As we see the matter, the replacement of the medium will come in what are generally known as the humanities first; thereafter probably in the professions; and lastly in the scientific subject.

"The other and equally important aspect of the inadvisability of all higher education being confined to a foreign medium of instruction is the inevitable segregation of the educated classes from the stream of life of the rest of the community, which such a state of affairs is liable to bring about. Here again, we can do no better than quote from the writings of Mahatma Gandhi:—

"Surely it is a self-demonstrated proposition that the youth of a nation cannot keep or establish a living contact with the masses unless their knowledge is received and assimilated through a medium understood by the people. Who can calculate the immeasurable loss sustained by the nation owing to thousands of its young men having been obliged to waste years in mastering a foreign language and its idiom, of which in their daily life they have the least use and in learning which they had to neglect their own mother-tongue and their own literature? There never was a greater superstition than that

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a particular language can be incapable of expansion or of expressing abstruse or scientific ideas. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers.

" 'Among the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils, it has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner therefore educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people.' (Young India 5-6-1928).

"Rabindranath Tagore once likened the university education received by a few Indians to a train with lights flooding the compartments flitting across the countryside. The compartments may be lit up for the passengers of the train but the light is no use for the countryside through which the train passes beyond giving them a blinding blaze! Indeed, higher education, so much cut away from the rest of the community, could not only not do any good to the general mass of the community, it could also not do all the good it might otherwise to its recipients themselves.

"We feel that it is not necessary to labour the argument any further."[10]

But the argument does not end there. For, the simple fact is always overlooked that Gandhiji himself was a product of English education and what is worse was exposed to the greater evil of being educated in England.

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10 Ibid, pp. 90-1

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Did it prevent him from mixing with the Indian mass? Was he incapable of writing Gujarati? We do not argue that by following the system of education prevalent in Gandhiji's time we shall produce other Gandhis: our contention is that Gandhis will not be produced simply by changing the medium of instruction. In this connection it is well to remember that all our national leaders were either educated through the medium of English or learnt English. The result can be judged if we compare modern India with some neighbouring countries which escaped the effects of English education, namely Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia etc.; the condition in Indian Native States may also serve as an example. It cannot be said that India has been the looser; on the contrary her gain has been enormous.

The effect of Gandhiji's ideas on education is thus described by the *Hindu's* Patna correspondent May 17, 1965.):

"Even a member of the Government (Bihar) has publicly admitted that the present generation had been turned into guinea-pigs for experiments in the field of education. The first blow was struck by the Basic system. Mahatma Gandhi's original idea of Basic Education was for all children, but it soon became a system for the poorer sections and those who could afford stuck to the traditional system. Subsequently, Hindusthani came into the picture to replace English and finally Hindi added to the confusion and lowering of standards.

"In the first instance, teaching of English was shifted from the normal introduction in Class IV for all pupils to Class VIII denying pupils the opportunity at an age when the learning of any language is easy. Later, English was brought down to Class VI, where it continues,

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but, in the meantime, enough harm had been done and a general attitude of indifference among pupils towards the language created.

"The standard of English begun in Class VI is practically negligible. There is no wonder that nearly 60 per cent of the students fail in English at the secondary stage. As students reach higher standards, they are unable to use authoritative text-books in English, while such books in Hindi are practically non-existent. The loss in mental blurring of potential talent or the fleecing of the poorest sections of the people in terms of money with cheap and undesirable text-books in Hindi has been incalculable."

Though this report is based on the conditions prevailing in Bihar, it seems to hold good for many other States.

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CHAPTER V

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE BILL

I

On April 13, 1963, the Official Language Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha. A sizable crowd, demonstrating against the continuance of English as an official language, gathered outside the Parliament, and, as they were being forced back by the Police, began to shout: "Delhi Police, shame, shame." One of the demonstrators suddenly remembering their purpose the slogan was quickly changed into Hindi: "Delhi Police *dhikkar*"!

But no one could recall the Hindi equivalent of 'police'.

But the scene inside the Lok Sabha was worse. The *Times of India* (April 14, 1963) reported: "Never before in the history of Parliament were such disorderly scenes witnessed as in the Lok Sabha today over the introduction of the Official Language Bill which provides for the continued use of English as an official language even after 1965.

"By the time order was restored after 30 minutes of tumult, three members had been suspended and two of them forcibly ejected by the marshal and the watch and ward staff for 'holding the house to ransom'."

In a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party held on April 16, Pandit Nehru explained at length the necessity of retaining English as an associate language, and it was decided to issue a whip demanding unqualified support of every Congress member to the Bill.

However, on April 19, members from non-Hindi speaking areas were reported to have indicated to the Congress Party that the Official Language Bill would be

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acceptable to them, provided the continuance of English for all Union purposes beyond 1965 was made mandatory. They therefore demanded that the word "shall" be used instead for "may" in clause 3 which provided that notwithstanding the expiration of fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution, the English language may, as from the appointed day (January 26, 1965) continue to be used in addition to Hindi for all official purposes of the Union for which it was being used immediately before the day. But this amendment was not accepted.

The basis for this demand was Pandit Nehru's assurance. Intervening in a debate in August 1959 on Mr. Frank Anthony's resolution that English should be included in the VIII Schedule, Pandit Nehru had declared: "So, I would have it (English) as an alternate language as long as people require it and the decision for that I would leave not to the Hindi-knowing people but to the non-Hindi knowing people." Pandit Nehru reiterated his assurance on September 4 during the debate on the Parliamentary Committee's Report. But it was quite evident that the Official Language Bill had violated his assurance which the South had taken seriously as a pledge by the Prime Minister of India.

This belief was fortified by a stupid act on the part of the Government of India. Immediately after the declaration of emergency on account of the Chinese invasion, all papers (weeklies and dailies) not only in Madras but in other South Indian States also, carried a Government of India advertisement showing the smiling face of Panditji with his statement quoted above assuring the continuance of English till non-Hindi speaking people decided otherwise.

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II

The debate on the Official Languages Bill began in the Lok Sabha on April 23, 1963 and continued till April 27. As soon as the debate opened, Sri Tridib Chaudhury pointed out that an important provision of the Constitution had been violated. Under Article 344 of the Constitution two Commissions were contemplated, one after the expiry of five years and the other after ten years from the commencement of the Constitution. The Constitution further provided under Article 349 that the President's sanction, which was necessary to introduce a language bill of this nature, would not be given unless the President had taken into consideration the recommendations of both the committees. The Government had appointed a Committee in 1955 whose report was available, but no committee was appointed in 1960, therefore from a plain reading of the Constitution it appeared that the President was incapable of giving his assent to the introduction of the Official Languages Bill, so that it could not be considered by the Parliament.

Actually, the question of appointing a Second Commission had been raised in the Parliament in due time. The reasons for not appointing such a Commission was explained by Shri A. K. Sen, the Minister of Law who stated during the debate on the Official Languages Bill:

"....And the point then raised was that since ten years have expired, we should have appointed a Second Commission under article 344, because the word used in article 344 is 'shall'. The Government did not appoint the Second Commission for reasons then explained by the late Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, who was the then Home Minister, because the First Commission's recommendations and the report of the Parliamentary Com-

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mittee were still under consideration and we were taking steps for implementation of that Commission's recommendations and the report of the Parliamentary Committee. When the matter came up here, I personally took part in the discussions and said that our view was that the word 'shall' must be construed as 'may'[1]"

Sri Sen then argued that under the circumstances it was not necessary for the President to appoint a Second Commission. The interpretation given by the Minister of Law may have been correct, but a better course would have been to have referred the matter to the Supreme Court as Shri Nath Pai pointed out.[2] In any case the Government's admission that the recommendation of the First Commission had not been implemented in time pointed either to the difficulty of introducing Hindi or to the inefficiency of the Government, and in either case should have served as a warning to all concerned against any hasty change. But this point was completely ignored during the debate.

The interest centred round the interpretation of Article 344 and 349 and the Speaker allowed the Bill to be introduced. However he stated: "So far as the appointment of the second commission is concerned and that the Government has failed is that, that would be quite a different thing. If the Government has failed, that might be a matter of censure against the Government.[3]...."

Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was then the Home Minister, introduced the Bill. According to him the Bill envisaged 'a prolonged bilinguism', that is while

1. *Lok Sabha Debates*, Third Series, Vol. XVII, No. 49, Col. 11372.
2. ibid, col. 11378.
3. ibid, col. 11382.

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Hindi might be used progressively, there were to be no restrictions on the use of English as such.[4]

This assurance as well as Panditji's long speech failed to satisfy the members and the apprehension of the South was voiced by Prof. Ranga who said:

"Let me say in conclusion that, unfortunately, for us the Hon. Home Minister has succeeded in not implementing in spirit as well as in letter the assurance, as we have read it, as we have understood it, given by the Prime Minister, not merely as Jawaharlal Nehru but as Prime Minister and as head of this Government and also speaking, as he said himself, for the general sense of this particular House. He has helped this Parliament to vote against its own right to demand that particular Report to be brought back again to itself. He has helped this Parliament to vote against itself, and in that way, to negate itself, negative itself and belittle itself also. It is a very unfortunate thing. It does not stand to his credit. At the same time he has achieved it, because he has got an overwhelming majority here. I am extremely sorry for this, for what they have achieved by simply saying that the Report of that Committee is not to come back to this Parliament but is to go only to the President."[5]

But the real sentiment of South India was articulated by Sri Muthu Gounder who said: "Formerly we were slaves of the English-speaking people, now we shall be slaves of the Hindi-speaking people."[6]

However there were less sentimental objections and a well formulated charge against Hindi was advanced by Sri Khadilkar who said: "What has happened to the

4. ibid, col. 11392.
5. ibid, vol. XVIII, No. 53, col. 12474.
6. ibid, vol. XVII, No. 50, col. 11752.

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progress of Hindi? Why is it that Hindi has not progressed so far? Why is it that the Hindi regions of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have not made any progress in this direction and introduced Hindi at the top-most level? Who have prevented them from doing this? They want progress of Hindi—excuse me for saying this—dependent upon getting full official recognition."[7] Sri Dasappa pointed out that up to 1957-58 (the period for which figures were available), out of Rs. 9 lakhs spent by the Central Government for the propagation of Hindi, Rs. 8 lakhs had gone to the Hindi areas and about Rs. 1.20 lakhs to the non-Hindi areas.[8] This indeed was a very peculiar state of affairs, for, no useful purpose could be served by attempting to popularize Hindi in the Hindi speaking areas, which the Government of India seemed to have been doing. Possibly this policy has been changed now.

However the real demand of the members from South India was that Panditji's assurance should be incorporated in the Bill. On the Government side it was contended that the Bill incorporated the assurance, which was denied by the opposition, and Panditji's speech did not help to clear the position at all. Indeed Panditji had made his position somewhat equivocal when in his reply to the letter of Sri C. N. Annadurai, the D.M.K. leader, he had stated that he was unable to find a way to incorporate in the Bill 'his opinion' that English should continue as an associate language until such time as the non-Hindi-speaking people wanted it. Technically Panditji was perhaps correct, but his sophisticated distinction between his personal opinion and the Government's action failed to satisfy the South. They were particularly sus-

7. ibid, vol. XVIII, No. 51, col. 11905.
8. ibid, col. 11926.

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picious because of the Government's refusal to change the word "may" into "shall" in clause 3, to make the use of English mandatory. This refusal becomes inexplicable in view of the Government's earlier stand when the Minister of Law explained away the Government's lapse in not appointing another Commission under Articles 344 and 349 of the Constitution, by insisting that "shall" means "may". Now, to an ordinary person, if "shall" means "may", then "may" also means "shall", so that there should not have been any objection to substitute "shall" for "may" in clause 3. But this the Government absolutely refused to do. And the result was a ghastly tragedy.

III

Panditji's prestige was probably never so low as during the Language debate. At the time of the Chinese invasion the nation had rallied around him, now he was openly being accused of "shifting his stand" and even worse. By trying to please both Hindi-speaking and non-Hindi-speaking people, he merely succeeded in alienating both, and what was worse, made the South Indians lose faith in the Government.

Possibly the only way out of this impasse was to have followed the Constitution literally instead of flouting its provisions. That is, the Government should have appointed another Commission after 1960. The Constitution, provided for appointing this Commission after ten years, not on the tenth year, so it might have been appointed any time after 1960. The findings of this Commission would have given the Government a better appreciation of the situation, and enabled them to draft the Bill accordingly.

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The South Indians also would have been well advised to have demanded a Second Commission instead of demanding the fulfilment of a pledge by the Prime Minister.

It is difficult to pass any opinion on the present constitutional position, but it may be worth while to find out whether another Commission may be formed now. If that is possible, it will be better to wait for its recommendations before another Language Bill is drafted.

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APPENDIX

I

HINDI : OUR NATIONAL LANGUAGE

BY K. M. MUNSHI[1]

I am deeply indebted to you for doing me the honour of calling upon me to preside over this Session. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is a conference concerned with our national language and literature. To be its president is a great honour. I know my limitations; I do not know Hindi well; I have not studied Hindi literature widely; I am not acquainted with the literary problems of the Hindi world. Last year you elected me President of the Rashtrabhasha Parishad. This year you have conferred this honour upon me. I can give you no other hope than that I will try to justify the confidence you have shown in me.

Gujarat has so far given two presidents to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan—a great Indian ruler in Sayaji Rao Gaekwar and the world-revered Mahatma Gandhi. But I am neither a ruler nor a political leader. I am but a humble worshipper at the shrine of Saraswati. The happiest moments of my life I have placed at her feet. I am but an author; and God has been very kind to me. He has given me the privilege of seeing some of my works being read all over India. I am indebted to Him for this.

Udaipur, where this Session is being held is famed in history. Who does not feel elated at coming here? Every stone speaks of some heroic deed. Every rampart of Chitor is carved with the martyrdom of heroes and the

1. Presidential address, the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Udaipur, October 6, 1945.

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jauhara of *satis*. Every mountain top echoes with the battle-cry of the dauntless Pratap. Here is Srinathji, the Presiding deity of Bhagwat Dharma in mediaeval times, claiming the allegiance of the whole of India. Here you have the sacred shrine of Ekalingji, the guardian god of the heroic Sisodias. Haldighat proclaims from here the courage of India. Here we can forget our thraldom to Britain. For a moment we can raise our heads in pride, remembering the mighty men who challenged the Moghul Emperor. Here we can look upon the future in the confidence that Aryan Culture is deathless and unconquerable.

But for the moment, I am sad at heart. Mahatma Gandhi has parted company with this Sammelan. It was at Indore that he brought me to it. Inspired by him and with his aid I started the "Hans" magazine in co-operation with the late Premchandji. At Nagpur he welcomed my scheme for an All India Literary Academy and accepted its presidentship. Today, when you have given me the honour of the presidential chair, he is not here to give me inspiration and strength. I cannot but feel heavy at heart.

I have read the correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Tandonji. We see in it clearly the devoted loyalties of two men who have consecrated themselves to two different ideals. Gandhiji believes that it is not only desirable but also possible to harmonize Hindi and Urdu. Tandonji believes this to be not only impossible but also undesirable in the interests of the Sammelan. Gandhiji is a creative idealist. He seeks self-fulfilment by concentrating all his powers in order to realise them. He wants to strengthen India as a nation. He has laboured hard and long to build its fabric on Hindu-Muslim unity. He has written that the national language should be

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neither Sanskritised nor Persianised but should be written in Nagari and Urdu alphabets. Tandonji replied that the Sammelan believed Hindi to be the national language, and Urdu to be only a style of Hindi adopted by a certain section of the people. He also expressed the belief that the natural alphabet of this language is and can only be Nagari.

The central principle of this Sammelan is that the national language of India is Nagari Hindi, that is, Hindi written in the Nagari script. For thirty-three years it has lived on this belief.

But Gandhiji is the architect of the nation. He is pointing the way to the time when Hindus and Muslims will know both the scripts and attain unity through Hindustani. Everyone must however, be prepared to dedicate himself to the truth as he sees it. The country will be benefited only if both the Sammelan and Gandhiji follow their respective truths with mutual toleration. If Gandhiji's ideal is true, the Sammelan will come round to that view and will not be ashamed to accept it. But Gandhiji has not left the Sammelan because he has resigned from it. He has expressly stated in his letter that just as he has been able to serve Congress better by ceasing to be its member, so will he be able to serve the Sammelan more by resigning from it.

The problem of the national language is not an easy one. Untiring confidence, enthusiasm and sacrifice will be needed in order to solve it. Will the Sammelan be able to achieve this? If it does, it will not be difficult to win back Gandhiji.

Last year I placed before the Rashtra Bhasha Parishad my own views with regard to the national language. I cannot imagine any other possible national language

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than Hindi-Hindustani. The name of Hindi-Hindustani was brought into use by Gandhiji in 1934 when he founded the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad at Nagpur. It is not a new word. Before 1892 Bhoodev Mookerji had used it. That language I consider, by its very nature, to be the national language of India.

The language of Madhyadesha has come down to us through the centuries as Hindi-Hindustani. The Nagari Hindi is its naturally developed modern form. Urdu is its Persio-Arabic style.

We can never measure the importance of Hindi unless we realise the position of Madhyadesha-Midland India. It is the heart of India. Our culture was born there; it grew there; its finest products were born there. Its soul took shape in Brahmavarta; its life flowered on the banks of the Sarasvati, the Ganges and the Jamna. Sri Krishna's Mathura was its ancient home; Asidvant of Janamejaya Parikshita was its ancient capital; Sanskrit was its speech; Prakrit, based on the same language, was its literary language and is the ancestor of Western Hindi.

Between A.D. 500 to 1000 Kanauj was the capital of Madhyadesha. Rajasekhar was its poet-laureate. He has told us that of all people in the country, those of Madhyadesha were the most cultured. Sanskrit was dear to them. The poets of Panchal were the best in the country. Their speech was as beautiful as their style. Their language was exquisite. Their verses were well composed and their articulation was as sweet as honey. The people of Panchal were the pride of Aryavarta. The women of Kanauj were wonderful; their ways were widely imitated by women all over the rest of the world. For 500 years Kanauj was the metropolis of India.

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From A.D. 800 to 950 the Emperors of the Prathihara dynasty, styled Gurjjaraesvars, ruled. Of them, Mihira Bhoja, Mahendrapal and Mahipal were styled Maharajadhirajas of Aryavarta. Their homeland was Mewar and Marwar. Harsharaj, descendant of Bapa Raval of Mewar, was the feudatory of emperor Mihira Bhoja. His son, Gohil II, captured by his master's orders, the cavalry of the Bengal king, Devapal.

The secondary language of literature prevalent in Madhyadesha was Sauraseni Prakrit. The literary form of its dialect was Sauraseni Apabhramsha. The local dialect of Western Madhyadesha was Gurjari. Mewati and Gurjari, still spoken by the Gurjaras of Swat and Kashmir, are the relics of that speech.

In those days, to the north-east of Mathura and in the Delhi region the spoken dialect approximated to Sauraseni Apabhramsha. It is difficult to find examples of this Sauraseni dialect, but Gurjari ended in au; Sauraseni in a, e.g., *Ghodau* and *Ghoda* for horse. However, there was very little difference between the two. Recently I collected a few of the folk-songs of the Gurjaras of Kashmir, who migrated north by about A.D. 1000. It is still possible to find in these songs, traces of the ninth and tenth century Gurjari used in speech.

At that time Apabhramsha was the national language in the country. Every province used its own modified form; in fact, there were about 27 varieties of Apabhramsha. But from Gujarat to Assam the same *Rashtrabhasha* prevailed, as the dohas of East Bengal testify. In the 12th century we find more or less the same language as that preserved for us by Hemchandra. An easily understandable variety of it prevailed in Malwa and Gujarat as is evidenced by the remnants of *Munj*

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Prabandha—a popular poem of the 11th century.

When the Turks invaded India there was a national language in the India north of the Krishna. It was understood by everybody and the authors of most provinces wrote in it. It had become the vehicle for expressing the national soul on account of the inspiration which it received from Sanskrit.

The Turks came. They established camps in the Punjab and in Delhi, and a new language of intercourse between the Turks and Indians came into existence. The Apabhramsha of the time was developed into several varieties, Punjabi, Western Apabhramsha, Eastern Apabharmsha (Avadhi, Bagpheli, Chatisgari), and Behari (Bhojpuri, Maithili, Magadhi, Chhota Nagpuri). These were different varieties of a commonly understood medium of speech.

Slowly the language of intercourse between the Turks and Indians was forged out of Vrajabhasha, Kanauji, Bundeli and the speech of Meerut, Rohilkhand and Ambala, and when Delhi became the city of Turkish power this language came to be used in that region. But the official language of Delhi was Persian. Hindi in its primary stage was only the language of the bazaar. Indians, however, continued to use their highly developed languages. Rajasthani assumed the shape of Pingal. The form Pingal was evolved from Apabhramsha. The elements of Gurjari were retained in the rasas of Rajasthan and Gujarat. In the Mathura region, the rich Sauraseni Apabhramsha assumed the form of Vrajabhasha and became the joint vehicle of literary effort for both Hindus and Muslims. Literature was also composed in Avadhi, Bhojpuri and Maithili. In Gujarat even up to the 19th century, poets took pride in writing in Vrajabhasha.

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When the Turks established the Sultanate in Delhi, Sanskrit was the one paramount language of religion and culture in the whole country; to the north of the Krishna, Sanskrit was the national language of the educated classes; in the South, of the learned. To the north of the Narmada, up to Mathura, Gurjari was spoken. North of this, and up to Banaras in the east, Sauraseni was spoken. To the east, were spoken Avadhi and Behari. In East Bihar and Orissa, the spoken language approximated to Bengali.

As a result of the formation of the Sultanate of Delhi, there sprang up in East Punjab, West U.P. and the region of Delhi a new language of intercourse between the Persian-speaking Turks and Indians.

In the region beyond the Sultanate the literary languages were largely influenced by Sanskrit and Vrajabhasha and the language of popular intercourse remained the same.

The belief that a national language for India is a modern conception is unfounded. Sanskrit was the national language of the elite in the country. There was a secondary national language of the people understood by everyone and this was reflected in all the provincial languages, as is illustrated by the literature which has come down to us.

I can give you illustrations from the literature of fifteen centuries. Their authors were Hindus, Muslims —including the Emperor Akbar—and Sikhs, including Guru Govindsingh. They can be easily understood by those who know Hindi. Their vocabulary and literary elements are common. These elements were found 1,300 years ago in Apabhramsha, then in Vrajabhasha, and now in Hindi. In this way the greatest common measure

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of linguistic unity is found in Hindi.

I will now summarise. In India, north of the Krishna, in ancient times, different forms of the same language were used and of them the language of Madhyadesha was the most powerful. Since the beginning of history, that is, before 700 B.C., Madhyadesha has been the principal factor in the political, social and cultural life of India. The first speech of Madhyadesha was Sanskrit. Since then the languages of Madhyadesha have had an intimate relation with it.

Up to A.D. 1300 Sanskrit was the language of culture and of the court throughout India. Even thereafter, it continued to be so in the Deccan for about 200 years more. If, by a national language, we mean that language, the cultural influence of which produces the greatest unifying force in the country, then Sanskrit is to-day that national language.

Between A.D., 1100 and 1300, north of the Krishna, Apabhramsha was the national language of the people and literature was composed in that language.

From that time up to about 1850, Vrajabhasha was accepted as the basis of the literary language of the whole of North India, and Behari, Avadhi, Hindi, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Nepali and even Marathi were its easily understandable variations.

On the basis of the 1931 census, 34,90,88,000 persons spoke Indian and Burmese language. Of these 25,37,12,000 used languages of the Sanskritic family; 4,67,18,000 used Dravidian languages which are predominantly Sanskritic; 2,14,12,000 used languages which are mixed with Sanskrit.

Taking the census of the same year, out of 100 Indians 90% spoke Indian languages; 35% had Hindi-

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Hindustani as their mother-tongue; 34% spoke languages closely associated with Hindi-Hindustani; 13% spoke languages predominated by Sanskrit; 6% spoke languages mixed with Sanskrit. The script of the languages spoken by 38% of Indians was Devanagari. The script of the languages spoken by another 27% was some form of Devanagari; while 20% spoke languages, the script of which was Dravidi.

Looking at these facts, it is obvious that only a language which is predominantly Sanskritic can be the national language in this country. Hindi is descended in direct line from the ancient national language of India. Its vocabulary is more or less familiar to 88% of the country. Those who speak it well and those who speak it with a slight effort form 69% of the people in this country, with the result that Hindi does not have to be made into a national language; it already is one.

Hindi as a national language is one thing. But I want "Bharati", as the language of our intercourse and politics, in which every Indian would write, in which every Indian would read, in which India would create her literature. I dream of "Bharati", the language of India, just as English is for England, French for France.

If the Sammelan were to concentrate on this objective for five years it would come into existence. What is there that cannot be achieved by faith and enthusiasm? I beg all of those whom my voice may reach to subordinate all other activities to this. India—Bharat—needs a Bharati University. The national languages of Rajasthan, Malwa, the C.P. and Gujarat, as well as the Juzr, or Gurjaradesha of the Prathiharas of Kanauj, is Hindi, enriched with the elements of old Rajasthani. If we have a University in either Rajasthan or the C.P., the national language will be evolved all the sooner.

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This is not merely a Sammelan on the Hindi language; it is also a gathering of literary men. Today every one of our provinces can claim new and forceful creations in literature. Unfortunately, all the wealth of our literature is not accessible to all the provinces. But the lines of evolution are the same everywhere. The last twenty-five years have seen an age of cultural renaissance in India. We have created a new literary tradition born of the impact of Western literature on the Indian. Novels, prose writings, dramas, short stories, biographies, autobiographies, lyrics, poetic dramas, poetic narratives, are all literary forms of our time. The historical romances of Bankim, the poems of Rabindranath and Iqbal, the lyrics of Nanalal, the social novels of Premchand, the autobiography of Gandhiji and the national songs of Bharati, have an honoured place in the literature of the world. But our literature has not yet acquired the beauty of the classics.

India is the land of literary masters. Our contribution to the classical literatures of the world has been by no means small. Greece gave to the world the Iliad of Homer and the Prometheus of Aeschylus. Italy gave the Aenid of Virgil and the Divine Comedy of Dante. England has given the Hamlet and Othello of Shakespeare; Germany, the Faust of Goethe; France Les Miserables of Hugo; and Russia, Tolstoy's Anna Karenina. India alone has given the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Shakuntala of Kalidasa, the Bhagwat and Ramacharita Manasa.

These are the sky kissing pinnacles of pure literature. The majesty of such heights has remained inaccessible to modern India. Why? I have often asked myself this question during the 35 years of my devotion to literature.

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One reason is that we have not abandoned the tradition of the medieval times. We still consider mere sentimental literature to be the best form of literary art. We cannot rid ourselves of our love of words. We cannot forget that literature must have a direct moral bearing. But the soul of pure literature is Beauty. From its every line, living personalities, realistic situations and the fundamental strength and weakness of the soul must leap out. In order to create such literature we must accept as a fundamental canon the idea that an author is free to create Beauty in any form he likes. One of the cherished beliefs in India is that a literary man is a slave of society. Even in Europe there is a fashion to contend that an author must create literature according to the mandates of the collective will. Stalin issued a mandate that literature should be written according to the Five Year Plan. He founded the Soviet Literary Men as if they were workers in a factory. We hear of all kinds of control over them: that literature should be progressive, that it should devote itself to village life, that it should restrict itself to uplifting the depressed. All this deprives literary men of their independence. Such made-to-order writings are not literature, they are propaganda.

In 1916 I wrote a short story called "My Temporary Wife". Then Gujarat grew very angry. Some critics said that it would have been better if my hand had been cut off. When my novel Prithvi Vallabh was put on the screen, an association from Karnatak sent me a resolution and demanded of me that I should write a novel on the lines indicated by them.

But when I write, I do not write for others, but in order to fulfil myself. I tear my heart open in bringing

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forth its hidden treasure. If you can appreciate it, take it; if you cannot, throw it away. But I shall body forth in words only that beauty which is born of my imagination, those cultural values which make up my equipment and my ideas. I will not be a father to other people's children.

I am giving you, young authors, the ideals which I have cherished during the last 35 years of my service to literature.

An author is free, a law unto himself. Criticism, popular wishes, the dictates of your political thought and the mandates of your leaders, these are all fetters. Let them not stifle your creative art. No person or thing can clip the wings of your imagination save your own cowardice. Let your vision rest on a limitless horizon. No one has a right to restrict it. The beauty that is enshrined in your heart is the only deity that you need worship. Your salvation lies in opening your heart and bringing forth the immortal gods enshrined therein for others to view and worship if they choose.

This law is the very breath of an artist's life. The literary man who shrinks from obeying it is not an artist. Like a buffoon in a show or a mercenary musician, he is no more than a hireling. For him there will never be the inspiration of the literary masters of the world.

The world's greatest master was Vyas. He did not write for his generation. Brahma created short-lived men and women. But this 'Brahma without four arms, this Hari with only two hands, this Shambhu without the third eye' created a world of men and women who are ever living and ever inspiring. Let the grace of this greatest literary Master of all time descend upon us, that the beauty of our creations may rise to the skies. That is my prayer.

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II

RASHTRA BHASHA: HINDI

BY K. M. MUNSHI[1]

1

I am glad that we have all met here to review the position of Rashtra Bhasha Prachar. You have been the pioneers in this work and you have done your work under great difficulty and with religious enthusiasm. If Hindi is a national language today, we owe it to the silent and sincere work done for years by you, and others like you.

You have recently passed through difficult times. The internal situation of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan has added to your difficulties. When I was the President of that body, I suggested that the Rashtra Bhasha Samiti should be placed on an independent footing. But my view was not acceptable; I am sorry it was not.

You have suffered the fate of Narsinh Mehta's children. To those children, happy in their poverty and their father's godly life, there were sent costly presents by Ra'-Mandalik. Immediately they started quarrelling over them, scratching each other. Mehtaji came and saw what filthy lucre had done, and sent away the presents. Where vested interest comes in, missionary zeal walks out. If you are true missionaries, you must have the courage to continue your mission, trusting in God and considering the fulfilment of duty to be its own reward. If all you workers remain united, nothing will weaken your cause; if your faith weakens, no cause, no support no organisation will survive.

Before the Constitution was framed, there was the

1. Address delivered at the Conference of the All-India Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Sammelan, Bombay, February 23, 1951.

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Hindi-Urdu quarrel. After a hard fight, the formula evolved by Sri Gopalaswami Ayyangar and myself was almost unanimously accepted by the Constituent Assembly. It defined the future of Hindi, the national language, as follows:

"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India, and to secure its enrichment by assimilating, without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages."

I know you are very much perturbed that your Kovid Examination should not be accepted by the Bombay Government. The Chief Minister has now recognised those who have taken the degree. For the future, the matter has, I understand, been left to the Centre. I have no doubt that, if properly approached, the Centre and the State of Bombay will recognise the justice of your demand.

The Centre has appointed a Committee for the purpose of regulating examinations. This Committee has representatives of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on it, and I am sure that no injustice will be done to you.

I know, however, what you feel. You thought that once the Constitution had decided on Hindi as the official language, your services would be appreciated, and that your work would be supported by the Provincial Governments, and that the old controversies would be forgotten. Now you find it is not so. The old controversy has assumed new shapes. Old influences and memories

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of past differences still carry weight with some men in authority. You are naturally unhappy.

Even the law has been pressed into the service of prejudice. For instance, in the report of the Bombay Text Book Committee, on which all the old Hindustani protagonists had found a place, they have decided that the 'Hindi' of the Constitution is not the Hindi of U.P., but something to be made hereafter, in other words the Hindustani of their hearts! As a lawyer I am not interested in fighting such amateur experts. But as your president, I must give you my own view. It is clear to me that Article 351 implies: (1) the existing Hindi in vogue as the base; (2) the native genius of such Hindi; (3) the future development of this Hindi; and (4) its enrichment by drawing upon (a) forms etc. of a different variety called Hindustani, without however interfering with the 'genius' of the existing Hindi, and (b) the vocabulary of primarily Sanskrit and secondarily other languages.

It will require more than a lawyer's conscience to say that the Hindi referred to in Article 351 is not the Hindi of the cultured in U.P. and Bihar.

But quite apart from law, at every stage of formulation, drafting and debate in the party in the House, I was intimately associated with the Part of the Constitution dealing with the official language. It would surprise me and most of the members of the Constituent Assembly who were parties to it that, when we were referring to Hindi in that Part, we were referring, with our tongue in our cheek, not to the Hindi, with the literary language as the base, but to the bazar Hindustani which was to be made into a literary language for official use in the future.

Do not forget, however, two things. First, the con-

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stitutional formula for Hindi cannot change men's hearts all at once, nor their attachments and repulsions, affections and prejudices. It only gives an occasion to redefine one's attitude in terms of the formula. But this is a gain, in this way, that both sides, drawing their inspiration from the formula, will come together. We must be prepared for such prejudices and differences of opinion.

The second truth is that a language is made neither by teachers or Acharaks, nor by politicians and officers nor by pandits and philologists. It is made by the people and in those literary men who have the creative power over words. It is made by constant adjustment between the needs of daily intercourse and the demand for higher expression.

Governments cannot make languages. For centuries, the Muslim rulers of India had Persian as their court language; similarly the British rulers had English, for a century and a half. Yet Tulsidas and Surdas, Bankim and Tagore gave to our popular languages their rich, artistic expressiveness. The Nizam, through the Osmania University, tried to create an artificial Arabicised Urdu for Hyderabad. At the first touch of reality, it is falling to pieces.

Nor can Pandits make a new language. The Sanskrit of Bana and Bhatti, a laboured language, was fashionable for centuries in the assemblies of the learned, who lived apart from life. It could enrich the living language but little; it succeeded in smothering the living Sanskrit, the spoken language, and reducing it to a distant language of effort.

The attempt, therefore, to distinguish between the Hindi of North India and Hindi, the national language, is based on ignorance or on the super-confidence of a

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few langu[illegible] try [illegible]ects to create a new language for India. Th[illegible]mpt can never succeed.

Hindi is the spoken language of eighteen crores of people. Several Governments have adopted it. A dozen Universities are going to make it their medium of instruction. Thousands of writers are shaping its power and richness. Tens of thousands of books are being published in it. He is a King Canute who says that the flood shall not come to other States, and that they will evolve their own Hindi.

In Gujarat, for instance, a few poets like Balashankar tried to keep alive the old Nawabi-Gujarati with its Persianised words. But the 'ulfut', the 'bulbulims', and even the 'bulbuls' disappeared; the 'prem' and 'pranayi' and the 'kokila' remain. 'Kismet' gave place to 'vidhi'. The 'Ao Jao' for imports and exports will go; 'Yatayata' will remain. That the language of high expression in India can only be drawn primarily from Sanskrit is a truth accepted by the Constitution which no effort can shake.

In the same way, the language of Pandits cannot force obscure words, pompous circumlocutions and phrase-mongering, borrowed from departed poets, on a living language. Hindi has a strange literary growth. Its seeds were sown a century ago by learned men in deliberate antagonism to the prevailing Urdu of the educated in the North. Modern Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi were natural growths and have been fostered by modern educated men during the last hundred and fifty years in a friendly atmosphere. Hindi has won its battle now; it is the language spoken and written in everyday life, and has a growing literature. Freed from antagonism, it will soon emerge as a virile language of natural power in the same way.

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When we say that Hindi must ... if the influence of Sanskrit, it is not to say ... men's should be Sanskritised. A language grows in beauty, richness and expressiveness by the impact of highly developed languages as well as the spoken dialect. All modern Indian languages, except Urdu, have acquired grace and power by the impact on them of Sanskrit and English and in some cases the old Indian languages. This process must continue.

Authors of creative power from Bankim and Tagore in Bengal, Tilak and Apte in Maharashtra, and Narmad to Umashankar in Gujarat have moulded the modern Bengali, Marathi, and Gujarati languages. And Hindi authors of today, including those authors who have adopted it as the national language, will make the Hindi of the future.

Another matter of importance is the use of technical words current in modern civilization and science and in international intercourse. In my opinion, it will be harmful to replace them, even if it were possible. If Hindi has to be a modern language, the English or the international technical words in use must be retained, ma... be in an easily identifiable Indian form. English grows and once Sanskrit grew, by ready assimilation of foreig... words. This is the only way to replace English by Hindi as the medium of higher education in the country and fulfil the objective of making it the national language in fifteen years.

Do not, therefore, interest yourself in the formation of language. Many have tried experiments to force our Indian languages out of the ambit of Sanskrit; no power has been able to do so, and none ever will be.

Our role here is limited and, therefore, easy. Ours it is to carry the message of Hindi defined by the C...

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23. I [illegible] es in the non-Hindi-speaking Pro- [illegible] try we have the zeal and the faith which have [illegible]iced so far we shall come through victorious. [illegible]s an [illegible]ember what I told the Hindi world, as Pre- 15. Uni[illegible]ammelan at Udaipur. I want Hindi to be ful[illegible]ati—the language of Indi[illegible]—as English is the langu- age of England. This Bhara[illegible] shall be the language emerging from the common pool [illegible] which all our Indian languages have brought their varied and expressiveness, shaped and influenced by the graces of Sanskrit and the power of the greatest of modern languages, English.

III

HINDI AND ENGLISH

BY K. M. MUNSHI[1]

....You cannot become a really Indian institution unless you have Hindi. Hindi is our national language. Without it, it would be impossible for you young ladies [illegible] 17. [illegible] to the Indian world and be useful to [illegible]e [illegible]country, or to [illegible] the large mass of Indian womanhood which is awaiting re[illegible]ption.

At the same time, I want you not to ignore English. It is unfortunate that, in our precipitate hurry, we have ignored the immense value of English. English was one of the principal factors in Indian unity; it gave us our nationalism; and it was only the impact of English which produced the glorious Renaissance in our language and literature. For one hundred and fifty years, it has been a language of India. Some of the best in this land have spoken and written it, or practised in law courts in it. It has been the vehicle of our scholarship, law and science.

1. Speech at the Annual College Day Function of the Isabella [illegible]burn College, Lucknow, on November 5, 1952.

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would accept Hindi cheerfully as ... medium ... education.

19. The South has not ... welcomed the idea ... introducing Hindi compulsorily even in the schools and universities, much less in the administration. Attempt, if any, made by North India to enforce such introduction will create greater resistance and would conceivably affect the solidarity of the country.

20. Knowledge of Hindi for public service examinations should, for the present, be kept at a level which candidates belonging to non-Hindi speaking areas can with a little effort acquire. The proposal for giving an alternative of English or Hindi at such examinations would lower the standard of knowledge and mental development; put non-Hindi speaking people at a disadvantage; keep out deserving candidates from a field where they are urgently required; and lead to an increasing gulf between the Hindi and non-Hindi areas.

21. If Sanskrit studies are linked with Hindi, it will enable students, particularly from the South, to study Hindi more easily, and also enable the Hindi-speaking students in the North to appreciate and use Sanskrit words with ease and accuracy; for, Sanskrit words have inevitably to be used if Hindi is to become a language of power, but they should be intelligently used with some background of Sanskrit language.

22. A special agency in the Universities should provide for refresher courses in Hindi for those desirous of joining those courses, including Government servants. Government servants should also be encouraged to take advantage of these courses, and for this purpose they may either be given leave or arrangements be made for lectures outside office-hours.

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23. I therefore suggest the following:

(*a*) The period of 15 years provided by the Constitution should be extended to 25 years by an amendment.

(*b*) The Union should immediately take steps to implement Article 351.

(*c*) A permanent Commission should be set up to promote and develop Hindi.

(*d*) During this period English should continue to be the medium for official purposes of the Union.

(*e*) After ten years, a re-examination of the problem should be made, and Hindi might be used as a variant.

(*f*) In the meantime, in the Universities English should continue to be the medium, with liberty to use Hindi as a secondary medium and not as a substitute; at the same time, the movement of accepting regional languages other than Hindi as such medium should not be encouraged.

(*g*) English should be the medium of public service examinations, together with a knowledge of Hindi.

(*h*) Where, as in Hindi-speaking States of the North, considerable progress has been made in adopting Hindi as a medium of higher education, a knowledge of English enabling the students to speak and write fluently must be insisted upon.

(*i*) A Sanskrit-Hindi Institute, with one professor of Sanskrit and Hindi at least, should be established in every university, which

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should receive a grant from the Centre for such Institute.

(j) A compulsory paper in Sanskrit and Hindi at the University stage should be prescribed in as many universities as possible.

IV—*The Development of Hindi*

24. The rise of great nations or the flowering of national cultures has been associated in history with the growth of one or the other language. As far as I can see, the greatness of India and the reintegration of her culture in the future are, to a large extent, bound up with the growth of Hindi as a national language.

25. My views on this subject may be summarised as below:

(a) Hindi cannot be the *Rashtra-bhasha* unless it draws predominantly from Sanskrit, as is laid down in the Constitution.

(b) To be a rich and powerful language like the English or the French and accepted as a world language, we must absorb apt words from whatever language they come, make them our own within the frame-work of Hindi and use them with appropriate vigour.

(c) Educated men should compulsorily study elementary Sanskrit.

(d) Hindi should not only imbibe the inspiration and influence of Sanskrit, but should also establish and maintain close contact with one or the other languages of the non-Hindi-speaking areas in the country.

(e) If Hindi has some day to replace English, encouragement must be given to the Universities to adopt it first as a secondary medium of higher

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education. In my opinion, both English and Hindi should be accepted as the media of higher education in every State in the country.

With Hindi as a secondary medium, regionalism will tend to yield place to nationalism. There will also be a nation-wide scope for service for graduates. Administration of the country will also be non-regional and the contact and exchange of scholars and teachers will continue as before.

(*f*) The purpose of making Hindi a medium of higher education will not, however, be achieved by mere translation of text-books by second-rate literary men. The literary men, thinkers and professors who set the tone of learning in matters of higher expression should first learn to think and express themselves in a language before it acquires genuine power and richness. We have a long way to go in this direction. For some years to come our best men in the country will have to draw upon a powerful and rich language like English for establishing contact with modern thought, language and expressiveness.

26. It is to be remembered, however, that the making of Hindi, the real national language, or *Rashtra-bhasha*, is a wider proposition than its acceptance as the *lingua franca*, or as the medium for official purposes. In order that Hindi may become the real *Rashtra-bhasha*, it is necessary to mould it in a fashion that would serve the needs of the highest expression by the educated men and women in the country. This would need efforts not only of the State, but also of the individuals interested in the subject. This *Bharati*, as I conceive it, should

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be a broad-based edition of Hindi; in the texture of such language the warp will be supplied by Hindi, the weft will be provided by the regional languages, the harmony will be maintained by Sanskrit, and modern flexibility by English. If we desire to shape and strengthen the life and culture of India, it is necessary for us to weave this fabric.

27. We should, therefore, go forward to use Hindi in whatever way we can and to the extent to which it can serve our purpose; to absorb appropriate words from whatever source they come; to develop new shades of meaning required for modern purposes by constant contact with English; to draw inspiration from Sanskrit so that the genius of Hindi may not suffer; and, above all, not to lose the freshness of the spoken language by failing to absorb the living elements of popular speech.

V—*Numerals*

28. The question of numerals, as I have already stated, was the subject of a violent controversy in the Constituent Assembly. One group thought that there could be no place for numerals other than the Devanagari form of numerals in the Devanagari script. The other group was in favour of the use of the international form of Indian numerals. Finally, this matter was resolved by Article 342 which prescribes that the international form of Indian numerals should be used for the official purposes of the Indian subject to certain provisos.

29. In my view after a satisfactory settlement of the matter had been made by the Constituent Assembly (only with one or two dissentient votes) unnecessary controversy need not be raised over this subsidiary question at the present stage. The international form of nu-

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merals may continue to be used as provided for in Article 343.

VI—*Hindi in Law Courts*

30. It is, in the nature of things, difficult to replace English by Hindi in law books and in the Courts of Justice for some years. This could be done only when Hindi is well-developed and legal education of the same standard as in English could be imparted in Hindi. A beginning might, however, be made by the Munsifs in all States being given the option of writing judgments in Hindi with a *precis* in English. The language of the District Courts, the High Courts and the Supreme Court should continue to be English.

VII—*Hindi in Administration*

31. (*a*) Hindi should become compulsory for all officers who have to serve outside their districts.

(*b*) Special refresher courses in preparation of notes and drafts in Hindi should be held for officers below the age of forty.

VIII—*Some other suggestions regarding Hindi*

32. It might be useful if the Central Government made a rule that they should present to Parliament each year a report on the progress of Hindi in official work and the measures taken for making Hindi a richer vehicle for the reproduction of modern ideas in the various fields of activities. Such a report will serve two purposes:

(*a*) It will enable the Union Government to take stock of the work done during the year and to present it in a co-ordinated form. It will also focus attention of the Government to the need for progress in Hindi.

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(b) It will enable Parliament to make suggestions on the subject.

A similar rule could be made by the State Governments also for the presentation of similar reports to the Legislature of the State.

33. A step in the direction of enrichment of Hindi would be for the States to sponsor or subsidise a series of publications of Hindi translations of the classical works of the world. In particular, the classical works in all the existing languages of India should be rendered into Hindi so that a common literary consciousness may be formed for the whole country.

34. A scheme should be evolved for the payment of grants-in-aid by the Government of India and the State Governments to all private institutions engaged in promotion of Hindi in non-Hindi States.

35. Service rendered to the cause of Hindi should be given particular attention in considering the Presidential awards of *Padma Vibhushan*, *Padma Bhushan* and *Padma Shri*.

IX—*Sanskrit*

36. India attained her solidarity and cultural vitality through Sanskrit and through Sanskrit alone has she retained them. With it we are a people with a tradition, culture and a mission; without it we are a bundle of linguistic groups. Sanskrit is, thus, what may be called the 'parent national language of India' providing the largest common measure of words and idioms. It has, therefore, to be promoted not only for its cultural value but also for the unity which it created and upholds.

37. While Hindi has to be developed, it would be a mistake to relegate Sanskrit to the background as a dead language. Indeed, it will not be possible for Hindi

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to grow in its natural environment and according to its genius if Sanskrit were to be assigned to the care of a few scholars and poets.

38. There is a general feeling that Sanskrit is a difficult language. So far as spoken Sanskrit is concerned, it is not really as difficult as it is thought to be. The fear of Sanskrit has been created more by the obstacle of the formidable grammatical rules with which the study of its literature is prefaced.

39. Re-orientation and re-vitalisation is necessary in the traditional methods of studying Sanskrit. For this purpose the courses of Sanskrit in the *pathashalas,* universities and other educational institutions ought to be revised to the end that Sanskrit is lifted to a simpler and more matter-of-fact form.

40. The old emphasis on grammar and cramming has to be transferred to the 'direct method'. The conflict between the pandits and the professors, the two types of scholars, should be reconciled on the basis of the good points of both and a graduated course of studies could be evolved for the purpose.

41. Subject to these general observations the following suggestions are made for the Commission's consideration:

(*a*) The study of Sanskrit should be made easy and popular.

(*b*) The elementary study of Sanskrit should begin at some pre-Matric stage and it should be carried forward, to the B.A. degree. By the time a student passes his Intermediate examination, he should attain a running familiarity with Sanskrit which will enable him to read books like the *Hitopadesha.* The study of literature and the ability to read Sanskrit text with a back-

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ground of its literary history and its relation to other Indian languages and Indian culture should be emphasized. At the same time, the study of Sanskrit up to the B.A. class should not be treated as a specialised study but only as a grounding for further study. The needless accumulation of informative subjects in the degree courses leads nowhere and should be done away with.

(ii) The Central Government should establish a Central Board of Sanskrit Studies and Research and State Governments should establish corresponding Boards in the States.

(iii) Careers should be guaranteed to students with higher Sanskrit qualifications in the pathashala-type of education and research experience, according to modern methods.

(iv) Provision should be made for the following:

(a) The establishment by the Centre and the State Governments of some Sanskrit universities in the country with Sanskrit as the principal medium. To these universities, the existing Sanskrit pathashalas should be affiliated.

(b) An Institute of Sanskrit should be established in each of the existing universities.

(c) Existing Sanskrit pathashalas, duly affiliated, should receive educational grants-in-aid from the Centre as well as the States.

(d) Funds should be provided for collecting and publishing unpublished Sanskrit manuscripts.

(e) A department should be established in the National Archives of India.

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micro-film copies of Sanskrit manuscripts could be collected.

X—*Miscellaneous*

42. In education the aim should be to provide for the acquisition of knowledge of four languages, namely one's own mother tongue, Hindi, Sanskrit and English.

43. The study of English should be encouraged even after it has ceased to be the official language of the Union. It is an Indian language by adoption; it has its use in preserving unity, in developing higher expression in the Indian languages, and in maintaining standards of scholarship; it is our international medium. For a long time to come, English text-books, both in Arts, Science and Law, cannot be dispensed with. The present sentimental insistence to remove English should be overcome.

44. At the same time, recent trends show that the insistent propaganda for introducing Hindi is leading to conscious or unconscious resistance mentality in several parts of the country. I am therefore of the opinion that, for a few years, constructive activities to develop Hindi should replace the propaganda to eliminate English. Impressions that organisations in Hindi-speaking States and protagonists of Hindi are trying to impose Hindi, would be removed by—

(*a*) setting up institutes and agencies for teaching Hindi and providing subsidies to teaching organisations;

(*b*) helping the Universities to take up the solid work of making the teaching and enrichment of Hindi as an integral part of their academic activities;

(*c*) frankly accepting English as one of the essential All-India media for twenty-five years;

(*d*) encouraging rather than propagating the use of

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Hindi as a second All-India medium in the Universities and a second language in High Schools.

45. It is important that the pressure of propaganda as regards the time limit should be relaxed in the interest of Hindi itself as well as of the unity of India. *At the same time, it must not be forgotten that if India has to stand competition with the world in intellectual equipment, it cannot do only with a second-class liguistic instrument which is yet in the process of making.*

Raj Bhavan: K. M. MUNSHI.
Lucknow, February 26, 1956.

IX

PLACE OF HINDI IN THE CONSTITUTION

BY K. M. MUNSHI[1]

On September 14, 1949, Part XVII of the Constitution enshrining Hindi as the official language of the Union in the Constitution, was passed. Thirteen years have gone since then, and in spite of opposition, Hindi has been making headway. Doubtless, some problems have arisen in connection with it due to circumstances which are irrelevant to discuss here.

When it is alleged that Hindi was imposed upon the country, it is forgotten that the movement did not begin with the Hindi-speaking people, but with Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Sri N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar and myself, three representatives of the non-Hindi-speaking provinces, who, in the interests of consolidation, were anxious to set the country in the direction of developing a national medium. In fact, at various stages, the Hindi-speaking people opposed the formula which Sri Gopala-

1. Kulapati's Letter No. 269, *Bhavan's Journal*, October 28, 1962.

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swami Ayyangar and myself evolved, as being too tepid or halting, but it was generally accepted by the Constituent Assembly.

I may, therefore, be forgiven if in this Kulapati's Letter I incorporate my article entitled "Inside Story of The Language Battle" published in the *Hindustan Times Weekly* dated Sunday, October 23, 1949, that is, within five weeks after the event. It is not a matter of history; it is a vital factor in developing history. The article has a bearing on the present controversy about English too. I wrote as follows:

> For two months, some of us struggled hard to produce a formula on the national language which would satisfy all parties in the Constituent Assembly.
>
> Two years ago, at my instance, the Congress Party had passed a resolution, accepting the Hindi language and the Devanagari script as the national language and script of India. There was a storm at the time. Pandit Nehru was very unhappy. Several small groups in the Congress Party were dissatisfied. Matters then stood adjourned to the last stage of the Constituent Assembly.
>
> In July last, a few of us met and an amendment was drafted making Hindi and Devanagari the official language and script of India and English as the additional official language for ten years. This amendment, which represented the largest common measure of agreement among those who favoured Hindi, was supported by about 80 members of the Constituent Assembly.

The Opponents

Against it were ranged three groups: (1) a small group which did not want an official language to be

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prescribed by the Constitution; (2) a very powerful but small group, which wanted Hindustani; and (3) the most formidable group of South Indians against Hindi, who wanted English to be the official language for 15 years, keeping the question of Hindi in cold storage till then.

The group which wanted no official language to be mentioned in the Constitution soon gave up its contention. The protagonists of Hindustani did not yield easily, but ultimately they did. The credit for it goes to Pandit Nehru who, with characteristic generosity, accepted Hindi and Devanagari. The few members who stood for Hindustani in the Nagari script had to abandon their point of view. The protagonists of English were, therefore, left alone to oppose the pro-Hindi group.

A battle royal raged in the Drafting Committee, in the Consultative Committee, in the Special National Language Committee, in private conferences. Passions were roused; there were a few walk-outs too; sober and elderly people flung strong language at each other. Some of us, however, wore down the opposition. South India first accepted Hindi and Devanagari in theory; in practice, they wanted English. Then they wanted replacement of English only by a two-thirds majority in each of the Houses of Parliament. The opposition, however, slowly weakened and the progressive replacement of English was ensured through the agency of concurrent recommendations by a Commission of Experts and a Committee of Parliament.

The Numerals Issue

Suddenly numerals assumed a formidable shape.

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Few people in the North realized at first that international numerals (till yesterday wrongly termed as Arabic numerals) were Indian both in origin and by adoption in the South. Having lived in the South, I knew that for the last two generations, they have used no other numerals for their languages or for Sanskrit.

Many people called the South Indian attitude unpatriotic. The blame was entirely unmerited. South Indians were as patriotic as the rest of us, perhaps more, when they accepted Hindi and Devanagari. Hindi is a language alien in grammar, structure and idiom to the South Indian languages. The only common element between their languages and the Indo-Aryan languages of North India is their Sanskrit vocabulary.

The emphasis laid on the Devanagari script and numerals on the score of their being purely Hindi was equally unsustainable. The *elite* of South Indians are as proud of Aryan culture as any in India. In matters of life and art, they are intrinsically more Hindu than North Indians; not from choice, but on account of their good fortune in not having recurrent visitations from Central Asian hordes. They wrote Sanskrit for centuries in their own scripts and their own numerals. Therefore, in accepting Hindi and Nagari out of patriotic motives, South India made a sacrifice.

Nehru changes his Mind

Those of us who believed in Hindi and Devanagari, in fact, gave up nothing. That was why in the Drafting Committee, I was the first representa-

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tive of North Indian provinces to support South India in its fight for international numerals. Pandit Nehru was first surprised that any one could think of having any but Nagari numerals in Hindi. But when he found that the so-called international numerals were Indian numerals, that the zero was the discovery of an Indian genius, he took to international numerals with great enthusiasm.

It was out of these conflicts that the formula which ultimately came to be known as the "Munshi-Ayyangar" formula was drawn up as representing the most realistic approach to the problem. When I went over to the South Indian point of view on the question of numerals, my friends of the Hindi zone were very angry with me. They thought I was a deserter from the standard of Hindi. Many and varied were the insinuations made against me. But, as I told them, Hindi was not my mother tongue; it was a provincial language of the U.P. I had accepted it not now but under the inspiration of Swami Dayanand's teachings 48 years ago as I saw in it the supreme instrument for national consolidation.

For some time, temporary passions clouded a correct appreciation of my advocacy of international numerals. It was forgotten that I was closely associated with the Hindi movement for many years; that I parted with Gandhiji himself on the issue of Hindi when he changed over to Hindustani; that I was an ex-President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; that when Gandhiji left the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, the Hindi movement in Gujarat would have collapsed but for the support I gave.

But the difference between my Hindi-speaking

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friends and myself was fundamental. Hindi was not my mother tongue nor did I consider it superior to Bengali, Gujarati or Marathi either in power of expression or wealth of literature. If I accepted it as an instrument of national consolidation, I could have no hesitation in accepting international numerals, if by so doing the whole country could be made to accept Hindi.

The Common Roots

We could not force a national language on the South Indians against their will; if we gave them these numerals, they would accept Hindi cheerfully. Thus my object was naturally different from that of my friends coming from the Hindi zone. The country accepts Hindi because of its advantages. It is spoken by the largest single group of people in the country; it possesses the largest common measure of forms, structures and words drawn from Sanskrit and other Indo-Aryan languages of the Sanskritic family; lastly, its present cast has been moulded with the assistance of Sanskrit. If the roots of Hindi were not in Sanskrit, as of Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Assamese and Oriya, it would be a foreign language to us; if it were not to be developed by drawing for its richness primarily on Sanskrit, it would have struck no roots at all.

Those who complain about Hindi being Sanskritized as narrow or communal in its outlook, scarcely realize the position of Sanskrit with regard to our languages. From the dawn of history, all languages in India, except, of course, the hopelessly alien Urdu of Hyderabad, have derived their rich-

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ness, expressiveness, dignity and rhythm from Sanskrit; only their vigour and vitality have, age after age, been drawn from the spoken dialects as all living languages have drawn.

Hindi of the Future

The lines of development given in what is called the "Munshi-Ayyangar" formula correctly emphasized the genius of Hindi and the necessity of drawing the vocabulary primarily from Sanskrit. In my Udaipur speech of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, I thus defined the future of Hindi:

"If Hindi wants to be a national language it must borrow from the strength and beauty of other languages of the country''.

As the national language, Hindi should be above being made an instrument of provincial language or provincial linguism. To many of my friends from the Hindi-speaking provinces this was not clear. Under the cover of numerals an unconscious conflict was going on.

Debt to English

The other struggle was against English. Old habits die hard. English, to our mind, was the language of the hated foreign rulers.

They are gone; but hatred continues against the most valuable legacy they have left behind. We forget that English is our greatest instrument not only to maintain national solidarity for the present, but also to retain our place amongst the great nations of the world.

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With passions running high, the "Munshi-Ayyangar" formula was called the handiwork of anti-Hindi forces, of men with a slave mentality. Naturally, people were apt to forget three facts.

First, the whole texture of our constitutional and legal concepts is woven with the aid of English words.

Secondly, Indian scholarship owes its high standard due to its close contact with English scholarship and its expression through the medium of English.

Lastly, Hindi can grow in precision and range of expression only by close companionship with English. If the Universities, High Courts and Legislatures were rushed into accepting Hindi in place of English, the whole intellectual standard of the country would deteriorate.

Ultimately the charter of the national language of India was accepted almost unanimously by the Constituent Assembly, thanks to the vitality of the Congress Party. The transitory provisions were only the result of a realistic approach to the actual conditions.

The "Munshi-Ayyangar'' formula was a characteristic solution of a most important Indian problem: the need for national consolidation on the basis of linguistic and cultural unity.

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X

ENGLISH IN INDIA

BY K. M. MUNSHI[1]

English literature today is no longer the pride of the Englishmen alone. It is as much an Indian's, American's or Canadian's as an Englishman's. Most educated Indians have for the last three quarters of a century thrilled to the rich beauty of English poetry; lived in the wonderland created by English dramatists from the mighty Shakespeare to the irrepressible Shaw; moved in English life with the aid of the novelists from Fielding to Hardy; built their outlook with the help of English thinkers from Bacon to Russel; and have absorbed the political and legal tradition of the great English politicians and judges. English periodicals, too, have had a formative influence on us. The Nineteenth Century, Contemporary Review, The Times, The Manchester Guardian, and The New Statesman and Nation have shaped our views on life and politics. The Magna Carta, transplanted to America in the eighteenth century and brought into Indian Law in its modern form by British and Indian judges and legislators, forms an integral part of our Constitution.

English literature has been great. In profundity and moral stature it has not yet touched Indian literature; nor in beauty the Greek; nor, again, in clarity and incisiveness the French; but all aspects taken together, it is richer by far than any other in the world. But more than this it has been, since the printing press, the most potent influence in unifying and uplifting the world. I know a little of the growth of our modern literature

[1] Speech delivered at the opening ceremony of the Exhibition of English Books and Periodicals, New Delhi, October 12, 1950.

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in India; and I am free to confess, in spite of my intense nationalism that, but for the tremendous influence of English literature, our languages would not have gained their present day vigour and expressiveness; our prose would have been stilted and lifeless as before; our poetry would have continued to be cast in outmoded and mediaeval grooves; and drama would simply not have been. It is difficult to say what shape the novels of Bankim, the father of modern Indian fiction, would have taken without Scott and Lytton; what flavour the exquisite touch of Tagore's poetry would have given without Shelley and Keats. In fact the modern literary renaissance in India has been the product of the impact of English literature on Indian literature with its Sanskritic traditions.

I have tried to pursue literary art though, I know with little success; but I am conscious that in my little literary output, and in fact in my whole outlook on life, the influences of two literatures—Sanskrit and English—have been inextricably interwoven. From my earliest days that I can remember, the men and women of the Mahabharata, Ramayana and Kalidasa's beautiful works formed part of my being. In that early world there also lived and moved and had their being the Napoleon of Abbot, the Caesar of Plutarch, the Ivanhoe and Richard Couer de Lion of Scott; the D'Artagnan and Jean Valjean of the French masters; the Elizabeth of Jane Austen; and the Desdemona, Portia, Prospero, Shylock and Falstaff of Shakespeare. Last May I saw Catherine Hepburn playing Rosalind in New York. For three hours I was wafted to the gleaming dawn of my boyhood's romance; I knew practically every line of As You Like It by heart; every sentiment echoed to the fresh impres-

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sions of a vision of beauty which lay buried in the creative depths of my being.

The other day in Bombay I was watching a dance drama based on my novel, Jaya Somnath. I sat thinking of the influences which had led to that creation. In the characters I could trace the lineaments of not only the epics of the heroes and heroines of ancient and mediaeval India but also the epics of Greece and England. The episode was Indian; the setting and the cast were Indian. The motives and sentiments were Indian, too. The major situations were historical. But I found the whole novel to be curiously built up of materials and motives in which I could not fail to trace the influence of Scott and Dumas, of Homer's description of the siege of Troy and of the word-architecture of De Quincey. The ballet was made up of Indian dances, but in them was woven the technique of the English ballet. The music was Indian, but its lilt had a curious mixture of our folk-tunes and English tunes blended through the medium of our classical melody.

Indian literary tradition fused with English literary art; Indian languages enriched by Sanskrit and leavened by the expressive vigour of English, thus producing a higher range of expression; Indian art forms inspired by the living art forms of English and European art—all this have been interwoven to produce a new expression, a new technique, and a vision of the new beauty which lies at the root of Modern Renaissance in India.

The introduction of English in India was no ordinary event. When English came to us, the world entered a new stage. India joined the brotherhood of the English-speaking world. It led, as I have said, to a cultural upheaval in India, to a wide vision. The barriers of lati-

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tude, colour and race were broken down; the East mingled with the West in the sphere of the mind; a great step was taken towards establishing direct human intercourse, and sweeping away national frontiers. Now English is no longer the language of England but the instrument of the One World which the sages envisaged long ago: 'the world a family', the world which we see being realised today through bloody battlefields and noble aspirations.

I am glad that the British Council has as one of its objectives the maintenance of the present high level of English in India. I wish it every success, for, much as I love my national language and my own local language, I want English to remain with us to enrich and vitalise them both. In the wider embrace of this world language we want to feel the kinship with the rest of the world.

To my countrymen I would say just this that history has placed in the hands of India a powerful instrument for spreading her message throughout the world. We should betray our ancient heritage and our future destiny if we were to allow this weapon to rust. We sent out our Pancha-tantra, our numerals, our philosophical systems, our literary and spiritual heritage to the world through the lengthy process of international contact without a common language. But today English is ours and with its aid we can make ourselves felt more than through any other agency. It would, therefore, be criminal to ignore or neglect English in this country.

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XI

THE HONOURABLE SHRI N. GOPALASWAMI AYYANGAR[1]

At the outset, I wish to say that I shall endeavour to the best of my ability to conform to the appeal you made at the opening of this afternoon's session. I shall try to be brief and what is more, it will be my endeavour to be objective in dealing with this problem. The problem has been before us for quite a long time now. We have discussed it amongst ourselves in small groups, in larger groups in the country, in the Press and so on. A great deal has been said on this problem in all these various places. Opinion has not always been unanimous on this question. There was, however, one thing about which we reached a fairly unanimous conclusion that we should *select one of the languages in India as the common language* of the whole of India, the language that should be used for the official purposes of the Union. In selecting this language various considerations were taken into account. I for one did not easily reach the conclusion that was arrived at the end of these discussions because it involved our bidding good-bye to a language on which I think, we have built and achieved our freedom. Though I accepted the conclusion at the end that that language should be given up in due course and in its place, we shall substitute a language of this country. It was not without a pang that I agreed to that decision.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (West Bengal: General). Unfortunately I am not able to catch what the

1. Speech delivered on 12 September, 1949 while introducing the language section of the Constitution. *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol. IX, No. 32. pp. 1317-21.

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honourable member says. Will somebody adjust the mike?

The Hon'ble Shri N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar: The final decision, as all honourable Members know, on the particular question is that we should adopt Hindi as the language for all official purposes of the Union under the new Constitution. That, of course, is an ultimate objective to be reached. It certainly involves that when that achievement takes place, we have to bid good-bye to a language on which many of us have been reared and on the strength of which as I said we have achieved our freedom, I mean the kind of language.

That decision to substitute Hindi in the long run for the English language having been taken, we had to take also two subsidiary decisions which were involved in that one decision. Now the subsidiary decisions were that we could not afford to give up the English language at once. We had to keep the English language going for a number of years until Hindi could establish for itself a place, not merely because it is an Indian language, but because as a language it should be an efficient instrument for all that we have to say and do in the future and until Hindi established itself in the position in which English stands today for Union purposes. So we took the next decision, namely, that for a period of about fifteen years English should continue to be used for all the purposes for which it is being used today and will be used at the commencement of the Constitution.

Then, Sir, we had to consider the other aspects of this problem. We had to consider, for instance, the question of the numerals about which I shall have to say something more detailed in the few remarks that I shall permit myself. Then we had to consider the question of the language of the States and we took a decision that, as

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far as possible, a language spoken in the State should be recognised as the language used for official purposes in that State and that for inter-State communications and for communications between the State and the Centre the English language should continue to be used, provided that where between two States, there was an agreement that inter-communication should be in the Hindi language, that should be permitted.

We then proceeded to consider the question of the language that should be used in our Legislatures and the highest courts of justice in the land and we came to the conclusion after a great deal of deliberation and discussion that while the language of the Union 'Hindi' may be used for debates, for discussions and so forth in the Central Legislature, and where while the language of the State could be used for similar purposes in the State Legislature, it was necessary for us, if we were going to perpetuate the existing satisfactory state of things as regards the text of our laws and the interpretation of that text in the courts, that English should be the language in which legislation, whether in the form of Bills and Acts or of rules and orders and the interpretation in the form of judgments by Judges of the High Court—these should be in English for several years to come. For my own part I think it will have to be for many many years to come. It is not because that we want to keep the English language at all costs for these purposes. It is because the languages which we can recognize for Union purposes and the languages which we can recognize for State purposes are not sufficiently developed, are not sufficiently precise for the purposes that I have mentioned, viz., laws and the interpretation of laws by Courts of Law.

Then we have to recognize one broad fact, viz., that

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while we could recognize 'Hindi' as the language for the official purposes of the Union, we must also admit that that language is not today sufficiently developed. It requires a lot of enrichment in several directions, it requires modernization, it requires to be imbued with the capacity to absorb ideas, not merely ideas but styles and expressions and forms of speech from other languages. So we have put into this draft an article which makes it the duty of the State to promote the development of Hindi so that it may achieve all these enrichments and will in due course be sufficiently developed for replacing adequately the English language which we certainly contemplate should fade out of our officially recognized proceedings and activities in due course of time. Those generally speaking, are the bases of this particular draft which I have moved.

Now in considering this draft, I wish to place before the House one or two facts. The first that I wish to place before the House is that this Draft is the result of a great deal of thought, a great deal of discussion. It is also—what has emerged—a compromise between opinions which were not easily reconcilable and therefore when you look at this draft, you have to take it not as a thing which is proposed by an individual Member like me or by three Members if I include my two colleagues whose names are set down here. It is not to be looked upon as something which we have put forth. It is the result of a compromise in respect of which great sacrifices of opinion, of very greatly cherished views and interests, these have been sacrificed for the purpose of achieving this draft in a form that will be acceptable to the full House.

Now I wish to draw the attention of the House to one or two of the basic principles underlying this draft.

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Our basic policy, according to the framers of this draft should be that the common language of India for Union purposes should be the Hindi language and the script should be the Devanagari script. It is also a part of this basic policy that the numerals to be used for all official Union purposes should be what have been described to be the All-India forms of Indian numerals. The authors of this draft contemplate that these three items should be essential parts of the basic policy in this respect for practically all times. I wish to emphasize that fact because I know there is a school of opinion in this House that so far as the international forms of Indian numerals are concerned, they should be placed in this Scheme on the same footing as the English language. Those of us who are responsible for this draft, we do not subscribe to this proposition. We consider that to the same extent the Hindi language and the Devanagari script for letters in that language should form a permanent feature of the common language of this country, to the same extent should the international forms of Indian numerals be of this basic policy. This is at the root of this Draft.

It is true that in order to effect a compromise with those who hold a different view we made one or two concessions in this draft which we thought would persuade the others to fall into line with us. One concession was that though the international forms of Indian numerals would be a permanent feature, the President even during the first fifteen years during which the English language will continue to be used practically for all purposes, during that period he may direct that the Devanagari numerals also should in addition to the international forms of Indian numerals be used for one or more official purposes of the Union.

The second concession that was made was that the

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question of the form of Indian numerals to be used for particular official purposes should be one of those questions which the Commission which would be appointed under article 301-B—I think it is 301-B—and it will be one of the duties of that Commission to make recommendations on that subject. We certainly visualised the possibility of that Commission saying, "Let the International forms of Indian numerals be replaced altogether by the Devanagari form of numerals." But we were willing to make this concession, because we thought it would be a gesture which would be appreciated by those who take a different view, and we also were perfectly sure that before an impartial Commission of the sort that will be constituted in the future arguments in favour of the retention of the international forms of Indian numerals permanently will weigh more heavily than it might in the atmosphere of a House where opinion is so divided as it is today in this House. Well, we were willing to take those risks. I mention these facts to show how great a sacrifice those who stand for the basic policy which I have enunciated have had to make for the purpose of reaching an amicable understanding with the exponents of a different view.

Now, I do not think it will be necessary for me to recommend the claims of the international forms of Indian numerals to this House. They must have read a great deal about it already, and I am sure those who will follow me here will have a lot more to say about it, and so I do not go into the history of this question. I will only mention one or two facts. These forms of numerals originated in our country, and therefore, we should be proud to continue the almost universal use of these numerals which is now made in this country as a part of the future language set-up in this country. (Hear, hear). Secondly,

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the whole world, perhaps with one or two exceptions, has adopted these numerals. It is but right that we should keep in step with the whole world, or it should be really the other way, the whole world is already ready to keep in step with us who really gave these numerals to the world. And shall we throw away this proud position in the world with all the attendant advantages that it brings to us? Shall we do so, in order to take to something which is not universally used even in this country and which it is impossible for the world at large to use in the future? Those two facts I should like to place particularly before this House before they reach a conclusion on this matter.

Now, Sir, with regard to this particular point, a number of alternatives have been proposed, but I would refer only to the latest which was put into your hands in the course of today, and that is the proposal which says it will place the international forms of Indian numerals practically on the same footing as the English language in the scheme of things. That means that for the first fifteen years, the international forms of Indian numerals will continue to be used and after that period Parliament might be left to decide for what purpose the international form or the Devanagari form should be used, or both should be used. It looks a very attractive proposition. But at the back of it is this feeling that you visualise the prospect of displacing that international form of Indian numerals altogether in this country. To those of us who are responsible for this draft, that is not a prospect which we can contemplate with anything like equanimity in the largest interests of the country and the world. And therefore it is because of this wrong approach to the whole problem that I am constrained to say that it is not possible for those who hold our parti-

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cular view to consider this alternative.

Now, Sir, a few words as regards the provision we have made in Chapter III that is, the language of the courts. We consider it very fundamental that English shall continue to be used in the Supreme Court and the High Courts until Parliament after full consideration, after Hindi has developed to such an extent that it can be a suitable vehicle for law-making and law interpretation, comes to the conclusion that it can replace the English language. My own feeling is that English will last in the form of Bills and Laws and interpretations of such laws, much longer than fifteen years. That is my own expectation. Now, it is important that we should realise why this chapter has been put in. Law-making and law-interpretation require an amount of precision; they require a number of expressions and words which have acquired a certain definite meaning; and until we reach that stage in regard to the Hindi language and I do not think at present the Hindi language is anywhere near it, ignorant as I am of Hindi myself (Hear, hear). I have seen a good deal of the Hindi translations of what happens in this House and I am constrained to say that even the little Hindi I know does not enable me to make out anything from that kind of translation. Perhaps people more versed in Hindi may be able to understand it; perhaps I do understand it sometimes, because of the large number of Sanskrit words that are used in these translations. But that is not Hindi in the sense that you could use it for court or legislative purposes.

I can tell you a story within my own experience. Ten years ago, I was making a Constitution for the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The language of the Legislature had to be described in a section, and those who were drafting it, those officers had simply copied out the lan-

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guage in the Government of India Act, that is to say English should be the language, but if any member was unacquainted with it or was not sufficiently acquainted with the English language he might be allowed to speak in any language with which he was familiar. Well, it so happened that the late Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru happened to be in Srinagar when I was considering this draft, and I thought that I might take advantage of his presence there for advice and sent this draft to him. The only portion to which he objected initially was this section about the language of the Legislature. He said, "What in an Indian State, where Urdu is the language of the courts and schools, and so on, could you really put in English language as the language of your Legislature?" I had a long discussion with him. I told him: "I quite see your point. I am willing to agree that the language of the Legislature should be Urdu to the extent that those people who are not acquainted with English should be permitted to speak in Urdu. But you are a great lawyer and supposing tomorrow I want to appear before either the High Court here or the Privy Council and argue and interpret a section of the Constitution, if it is framed in Urdu, would you feel happy?" He appreciated my point. I told him as a compromise, "I will put in Urdu as the language of the Legislature for debates with a proviso that the authoritative texts of Bills and Acts shall be in the English language." He instantly agreed to my suggestion and thought that this was the most sensible solution of the problem that confronted us both.

I am mentioning that to you, because at the present moment in India we have to face a similar problem. Our courts are accustomed to English; they have been accustomed to laws drafted in English, they have been ac-

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customed to interpret in English. It is not always possible for us to find the proper equivalent to an English word in the Hindi language and then proceed to interpret it with all the precedents and rulings which refer only to the English words and not the Hindi words. That is why we felt it absolutely necessary—almost fundamental—to this Constitution if it is to work that this Chapter should go into it.

Sir, I do not wish to go into other matters, because I am afraid I have already exceeded the time you have fixed for me. I would only appeal to the House that we must look at this problem from a purely objective standpoint. We must not be carried away by mere sentiment or any kind of allegiance to revivalism of one kind or another. We have to look at it from the standpoint of practicability. We have to adapt the instrument which would serve us best for what we propose to do in the future and I for one agree with you, Sir that it will be a most unhappy thing, a most disappointing illustration of our inability to reach an agreed conclusion on so vital a matter if on this point we have to divide the House. I am sure that good sense will prevail.

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THE AUTHOR

Dr. ASOKE KUMAR MAJUMDAR, son of Dr. R. C. Majumdar, the great scholar and historian, was born at Calcutta in 1916. He was educated at Dacca and Calcutta. Historical research was in his blood. Under the guidance of his father and Dr. D. C. Ganguly and encouraged by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, he brought out his first work, the *Chaulukyas of Gujarat* in 1956. This attracted the notice of Dr. K. M. Munshi, who appointed him on the staff of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, first as a Professor of the Bhavan's College, Bombay, and then as Assistant Editor of the monumental series *History and Culture of the Indian People* published by the Bhavan and Editor in charge of *The Constituent Assembly Documents—Munshi-papers.*

His second book, *The Advent of Independence,* which deals with the transfer of power in 1947 was published in 1962. The present work deals with one of the problems which arose after Independence.

Dr. Majumdar was at New Delhi and studied at close quarters the problem of official language, not only from the official angle, but from that of the Members of Parliament and officials from the various States.

Presently he is the Joint Director and Head of the Post-Graduate Research Department of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

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